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THE TRANSIT OF EGYPT

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THE TRANSIT OF EGYPT

BY

LIEUT.-COLONEL P. G. ELGOOD, C.M.G.

"He that undertaketh the story of a time, specially of any length, cannot but meet with many blanks and spaces which he must be forced to fill up out of his own wit and conjecture."—*Francis Bacon.*

NEW YORK / RUSSELL & RUSSELL

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1928

REISSUED, 1969, BY RUSSELL & RUSSELL
A DIVISION OF ATHENEUM PUBLISHERS, INC.
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH
EDWARD ARNOLD (PUBLISHERS) LTD., LONDON

L. C. CATALOG CARD NO: 68-27055

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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PREFACE

Accident brought about the British occupation of Egypt. The prime minister of the day drifted into it : his successors have never been able to escape from the entanglement. There followed a period of paternal and prosperous rule, which culminated in the Anglo-French convention of 1904. The agreement disposed of one embarrassment, created another. France ceased to protest against the occupation, and Egypt took her place. Dominated by desire to break with England, she grew moody and restless. Tumult and confusion came later and prevailed, until Great Britain, yielding to clamour, granted Egypt a sovereign independence. So terminated the first phase of the occupation.

The second, the logical outcome of this successful stewardship, is still running its course, and the end is uncertain. Egypt is claiming a fuller heritage. For the present she is free to conduct her own business : but a British garrison remains to keep order in the last resort.[1] Were the wishes of Egypt alone at stake, Great Britain might perhaps withdraw this last symbol of control, and leave the country to its fate. But the course is impossible. The world has not stood still during the process of Egypt's reconstruction, and the occupation has thrust upon Great Britain new and grave responsibilities. The protection of foreign interests is one : the defence of the Suez Canal a second. This imperial corridor cannot again be left at the mercy of international agreements, or at the goodwill of another Power. British troops must stand guard over it in peace no less than

[1] Speech in the House of Commons of the Foreign Secretary on July 30, 1928.

in war. Such is the conviction of every reflective Englishman.

The necessity is less apparent to the Egyptian. He is sure of his capacity to defend the canal against attack, he is convinced that the presence of a permanent British garrison in his country would impair its sovereignty, and no argument will persuade him to abandon these beliefs. It is better to recognize the fact, and to postpone for a time negotiation. For if compromise were reached, there would remain in the Sudan a second potential source of dispute. The Egyptian parliament claims priority over the waters of the White and Blue Niles : a pretension that Great Britain, who holds the Sudan in trust for its inhabitants, cannot admit. Egypt's anxiety about her future water supply is perhaps intelligible, but none the less groundless. The Nile is of sufficient volume to satisfy the irrigation requirements of both countries.

The experiment of representative government has lately come to an abrupt end. Parliament is suspended, and authority has passed to the Crown. The step provoked indignation in political circles ; but the country received the decree quietly. The need of change has been obvious for long to all thinking Egyptians. Politics were bringing government into disrepute and administration to a standstill. And behind these misfortunes the country was threatened in the autumn with fresh trouble over the interpretation of the declaration of independence. The pact between the Wafd and the Liberal Constitutionalists wore thin on Zaghlul's death, and the Liberals became restive at the airs of authority assumed by the first. The moment was opportune to dissolve the partnership. The Wafd had lost personality and inspiration: the country was losing patience with it. The party in short had outlived its usefulness to Egypt.

It had tried conclusions with England too often and with too little success to retain the confidence of moderate men : it had criticized the throne too frequently to enlist the protection of the sovereign. By the indiscretion of the leader, the King is entrenched more securely than ever in his prerogative. His prestige is at its height : in the confused politics of the country he has come to be the only

stable and authoritative element. At his elbow stands a new prime minister, Mohammed Pasha Mahmud, a man unmoved by clamour and indifferent to popularity, who is determined to give Egypt respite from faction and dispute : a laudable ambition, even if the trial involves suspension of the written constitution.

It is not the business of Great Britain to dictate to the sovereign and his ministers the forms of government under which Egypt will thrive best,[1] and Englishmen neither approve nor disapprove of the transfer of authority from parliament to the Crown. Their interest in the matter stops short at a natural regret that the step should be necessary. Yet this much may usefully be said. Great Britain, so long as she maintains an armed force in the country, cannot entirely disassociate herself from the domestic fortunes of Egypt. When feeling is tense and passion runs high, it may become her duty to interfere, lest greater disaster follow. Her representatives will need in the near future, no less than in the distant past, a cool judgment and a sympathetic understanding. Happily there is no reason to apprehend the need of interference. The King is well versed in statecraft : the prime minister and his colleagues have served a long apprenticeship to administration. They have started on a course advantageous to their country : they expect to reach their goal within three years. It is perhaps an optimistic forecast. Lord Cromer laboured a generation to accomplish his end, and Egypt's new rulers may be no more fortunate.

It may not be out of place at this point to state my credentials for writing contemporary history. They are modest enough : no more than what long residence in Egypt, and service in the ministries of war, interior, and finance afford. Of the greater number of events narrated in the third and fourth parts of *The Transit of Egypt*, I have been a spectator : with the actors in them I have enjoyed more than a passing acquaintance. My survey of the occupation

[1] In a covering letter to the declaration of independence, the High Commissioner expressly stated that "the creation of a parliament with the right to control the policy and the administration of a constitutionally responsible government, is a matter for His Highness and the Egyptian people to determine."

is perhaps incomplete: but neither prejudice nor partiality has guided it. And lastly I venture to add that my affection for Egypt is second only to my love for Great Britain.

P. G. ELGOOD.

HELIOPOLIS,
EGYPT,
1928.

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THE TRANSIT OF EGYPT

PART I—SUBJECTION

CHAPTER I

CONQUEST AND OCCUPATION

Two thousand years ago, Egypt sank into a humiliating vassalage, and strangers imposed upon her people unfamiliar traditions and manners of life. In the course of these centuries of servitude, she lost more than political independence. Her spirit was quenched, her enthusiasm faded, so that nothing remained to mark the splendour of her ancient dominion, but crumbling temples, and fragmentary records of their builders. Different ambitions inspired the different conquerors. Cambyses sought to revenge a slight, Ptolemy to gain a throne, Amr to win renown, and Bonaparte to injure England. To each invader in turn Egypt bent a submissive neck. This was her melancholy history from the Persian conquest five hundred years before the birth of Christ: a painful but instructive lesson of the instability of empire.

In 525 B.C. Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, crossed the isthmus of Suez, and gave battle to Psammetikh III at Pelusium.[1] It was an easy victory for Persian arms. Inferior in valour and in discipline, the defenders gave way, and Cambyses became master of Egypt. He was prudent in the hour of victory. Egypt paid tribute, and acknowledged her sub-

[1] Tradition relates that the Persian won the day through artifice. Cambyses observing the reverence paid by Egyptians to the cat, placed a number of these animals in the van of his army. The trick was successful. Rather than become the instrument of impiety, the Egyptian soldier permitted himself to be cut to pieces.

jection: for the rest Cambyses carefully respected national prejudice.[1] But he stayed too short a time to consolidate his conquest. Affairs of state recalled him to Persia, and Egypt, taking advantage of the opportunity, broke into insurrection. Disorder spread until Cambyses had again to take the field. He was less fortunate in this second campaign, and meeting with reverse, he retired in confusion upon Syria. It was an unexpected success for Egyptian arms. Imprudently the people laid aside their weapons, and returned to the pursuits of peace. A second and more formidable invasion thus caught them unprepared. Darius I, successor of Cambyses, while on the march to the Bosphorus, turned and entered Egypt. She made no resistance, and the Persian, unwilling to weaken his army, left only a slender garrison to guard the conquest. It was in his mind to hold the valley of the Nile through wise and tolerant government rather than by display of force: a policy judicious enough, and successful until news of the victory of Marathon reached Egypt. Then the Egyptians were stirred to action. Taking their courage in hand, they rose, and under the leadership of Kabbash expelled the garrison. During the following years, fortune sided now with the Egyptian, now with the Persian, until the first, making cause with Athens, got the better of the common enemy. But the independence thus won did not last, and in 343 B.C. Nectanebos, the last king of ancient Egypt, abandoned the struggle and fled the country. Once more the Persian standard floated across the length and breadth of Egypt. But vicissitude had taught the invader nothing, and reconquest stiffened his natural arrogance. He passed like a whirlwind through the land, until the Egyptians, unhappy and disconsolate, sought relief from any quarter. It came from Greece. Alexander the Great, fresh from his victory over Darius III on the banks of the Issus, appeared before the gates of Pelusium in 332 B.C. Hardly had that

[1] The well-known story of his insult to the Sacred Bull rests upon the foundation of Herodotus (Book III). It may be true, or be no more than the customary gossip, which centres round the personality of every conqueror. On the other hand, Brugsch, in Chapter XIX, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Murray, London, 1881), mentions inscriptions in the Serapeum at Memphis that indicate Cambyses' respect for the apis-bull.

stronghold capitulated, than the Egyptian flocked to the Greek camp. He implored Alexander's protection, he offered him assistance. The campaign that followed was short but decisive. The Persians, outnumbered and outgeneralled, gave way, and Memphis, the capital, submitted to Alexander. Egypt had exchanged masters. The Persian was gone : the Greek had taken his place.

None the less, it was a welcome change to the Egyptian people. Despite the good-humoured patronage of Cambyses and the prudent administration of Darius, Persian rule won neither the respect nor the confidence of Egypt. It had been an uninspiring occupation, a chequered record of conquest and defeat, that left Egypt impatient of relief. Failure was due perhaps as much to the contempt of the Persian noble for all things Egyptian as to actual misgovernment. Nothing had been sacred from the ridicule of Viceroys and their courts. They mocked at the prejudices and ideals of Egypt : they found in her worship of bulls and cats a convenient subject for their wit. But Egyptians were not a race that suffered insult to go unmarked, and the gibe sank deeper than the haughty Persians thought. Egypt kept the score, and bided her revenge. The arrival of the Greek provided the opportunity that she sought.

It was important for Alexander at this stage to secure his right flank,[1] and he prudently endeavoured to win the friendship of the Egyptian people. He proclaimed that he had come as a saviour, not as a conqueror : he showed profound respect for all national customs and observances. With this end, he publicly sacrificed to Apis, the god whom Cambyses is alleged to have dishonoured, and he consulted the oracle of Jupiter Ammon [2] at the oasis of Siwa. He was well repaid for the pains. The populace of Memphis had accepted him as King, the priests of Ammon now acknowledged his title to divinity. He might have stayed and exchanged his

[1] The menace came from the Persian fleet, then mistress of the Mediterranean. (See page 435, *The Conquest of Civilization*, by J. H. Breasted. Harper Bros., New York, 1926.)

[2] It is sometimes suggested that Alexander travelled to this Oasis to examine its possibilities as a military outpost, and the theory has found support from the belief that any religious ceremony or coronation could have taken place as easily at Thebes as in Siwa.

kingdom of Macedon for the empire of Egypt: but he was dreaming of a greater dominion than either, and was impatient to be gone. He contented himself, therefore, with founding a city, that has perpetuated his name for all time, and he prepared to resume his march. Hurriedly he arranged the future of Egypt. He bestowed on her an autonomy, but he left a garrison to watch his interests. It was an occupation in all but name.

Following the death of Alexander in 323 B.C., Ptolemy, one of his lieutenants,[1] seized Egypt as his share of the inheritance. A powerful body of mercenaries supported the pretension, a capacity for administration made good the claim. He was a notable prince, a ruler who revived the earlier glory of Egypt. His conquests almost rivalled those of Alexander. He subjugated Phenicia and Syria, he overran the shores of the Red Sea. He added Cyprus and Cyrene to his kingdom, he extended his authority into the heart of Asia Minor. He could have succeeded Alexander as king of Macedon had he so desired; but he put that temptation behind him, and preferred to rule over Egypt. His power rested upon arms: he conceded to the soldier privileges and liberties denied to the civilian. But he studied no less the arts of peace. He planned the construction of new and splendid temples, he founded libraries and museums. His sense of statecraft equalled his instinct for war. He cultivated impartially the gods of Greece and of Egypt, and preserved an even balance between Hellenism and the spirit of the East. He patronized learning, he was the friend and pupil of Euclid and other men of science. Such was Ptolemy, an inspiring prince, whose descendants reigned over Egypt for the space of three hundred years. Philadelphus and Euergetes followed closely in his steps, but Philopator, the fourth Ptolemy, who succeeded to the throne in 222 B.C., was a less worthy member of the family. Under his dissolute rule, the army lost discipline, the admin-

[1] Ptolemy, a favourite companion of Alexander the Great, had followed his leader across the Dardanelles in 334 B.C., and taken part in the battle of Issus two years later. He accompanied the expedition to Egypt. Like Xenophon, he kept an accurate record of the incidents of war, and Arrian, the historian of Alexander's campaigns, bases his narrative largely upon Ptolemy's diaries. (*The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*, by Creasy, Chapter III.)

istration of the country crumbled away. Torn with faction, the citizens of Alexandria asked counsel from Rome. It was a fatal error of judgment, of which Rome later took advantage. The dynasty had already begun to decay. The succeeding kings and queens of Egypt never regained the influence that their family had once exercised in the eastern Mediterranean: the political talent and genius for war of the earlier Ptolemies had vanished. There were long periods when reverse shook the throne to its base and impaired its authority; and from defeat abroad and dissension at home, the kingdom of Egypt shrank to the dimensions of a modest principality. Yet despite these vicissitudes, Philopator could count upon substantial support from one section or other of the population: a tribute to the judicious exercise of the royal prerogative. And so admirably did the family manage their business, that the right of the heir to occupy the throne in his turn was not challenged. The Ptolemies were prudent rulers. All government lay in Greek hands. They controlled the administration, held command of the army. When the Egyptian was called upon to serve, he did not carry arms, but was bidden to perform the menial duties of the camp. It was the fifth Ptolemy who departed first from that discreet practice. He raised, perhaps from reasons of economy, a number of Egyptian military units, and permitted them to garrison strategic points. That rash innovation exacted heavy retribution. Before many months had passed, the new levies were clamouring for the dismissal of Macedonian officers, and when the demand was refused they mutinied, and incited the population to revolt. The disorder which followed, cost the ruler half Egypt, and marked fresh decline in prestige abroad.

Neighbouring princes sought advantage from these domestic misfortunes. The kings of Macedon and of Syria formed an alliance, and would have marched upon the reigning Ptolemy, had not Rome interposed. That aspiring Power had been keeping a watchful eye upon Egypt for many years. Warfare with the Etruscans and the Samnites had driven her consuls into establishing Roman supremacy throughout the length and breadth of Italy: but these campaigns, undertaken less by thought of conquest than self-defence,

brought the republic into contact with the Carthaginians, then masters of the western Mediterranean. Against that powerful enemy the Roman senate sought an ally in Africa, and Egypt supplied the want. The bloody Punic wars followed, until the victory of Zama in 202 B.C. closed the struggle. Then Rome turned her attention more seriously on Egypt, and despatched a mission to investigate her reported wealth. The report was sufficiently encouraging to persuade the republic of the advantage of closer alliance, and Rome issued a warning that no Mediterranean power dared defy. So passed a hundred and fifty years, when a dispute between the children of Ptolemy XIII provided excuse for more direct action. Julius Cæsar, hurrying to Egypt in pursuit of Pompey, a fugitive from the field of Pharsalia, claimed his right as a Consul of Rome to decide between Cleopatra and her brother. It was a mission that nearly cost the judge his life. His pomp and air of authority offended the people of Alexandria, his decision in favour of Cleopatra added fuel to their wrath. They fell upon the visitor, and besieged him in his palace. There was a sharp struggle. Then Cæsar, reinforced by troops from the East, gained the mastery, and returned to Rome. Cleopatra went in his train. From the tumult and intrigue that followed the murder of Cæsar, the Queen of Egypt held aloof. It would have been well for her and for her country, had she held to that prudent course, and bridled her insatiable appetite for adventure. But nature was too strong. She wished to triumph both as a woman and as a ruler. Antony satisfied the dual craving, and began a partnership that poets and historians have immortalized. For a time this pair of princely lovers lived amorously in Alexandria. Then ambition awoke again in Antony, and he conspired against Octavian in Rome. It was an unequal fight : Roman ships and Roman legions were more than a match for the forces of Egypt. Antony's star had set. Off Actium, in 31 B.C., he suffered a complete defeat, and with Cleopatra fled from the combat. There was no refuge to be had in Egypt, and rather than fall into the hands of the victor, the fugitives preferred death. Cleopatra was the last of her race, and the kingdom of Egypt passed into the keeping of Rome. It was an inglorious ending to a once powerful and virile dynasty.

Rome at this period was mistress of an empire whose frontiers marched with the natural boundaries of the old world. The Atlantic Ocean guarded her left flank, the German and Baltic Seas her north : the Euphrates marked the limit of her dominion of the east, and the inhospitable deserts of Arabia of the south. In every corner of this vast territory Roman legions had carried their eagles, and pitched their camps. As the authority of the republic extended, the treatment of conquered provinces became more uniform. Important trading centres retained the privilege of self-government, but with the province were subjected to the authority of a Roman proconsul. The senate farmed the taxes, the publican or collector became an instrument of extortion. Outside the walls of Rome, no subject of the empire enjoyed political rights. It was left to Augustus in the instance of Egypt to break with the tradition that conquest was the spoil of the senate and the people. He was then at the height of his power. The victory of Philippi in 42 B.C. had removed Brutus and Cassius from his path, that of Actium eleven years later, Antony the last remaining rival. There was then in the empire no patrician courageous enough to dispute his will. Thus when he claimed Egypt as his personal domain and her revenues as part of his private purse, the pretension passed unnoticed. It was not his habit to invite the opinion of the Roman people upon his acts, or the judgment of the senate upon his policy. His views upon the control of Egypt underwent no examination at the hands of that body : its members were even forbidden to set foot in the country without the Emperor's permission. Of Egyptian sentiment he took no account. If he did not alter all the forms of government in existence, it was not with the intention of courting the favour of Egypt. He found an administrative and judicial organization that suited his own ends : he continued it for that simple but adequate reason. Alexandria came off less easily. It was at this period second only to Rome in size and importance. Its marts dominated commerce between the east and west, its universities and schools attracted students from every province of the empire. But unhappily the city bore also an evil reputation for turbulence. The most trifling dispute was sufficient to promote riot, and wash the streets in blood. Then every public

building became a citadel ; every district an area of slaughter. Nothing could expel this incurable taste of the citizens of Alexandria for fighting among themselves. The Greek element of the population menaced the plans of Augustus, and its spirit he was determined to break. He suppressed therefore the local Senate, he filled the executive with Romans, and he withdrew the privileges hitherto enjoyed by Greeks. They were measures which his professed respect for Egyptian prejudices threw into sharp relief.

But Augustus had not seized Egypt out of dislike of Hellenism, but to control her corn production in his own interest. For many years the food situation in Rome had given anxiety. There was never a substantial margin, and there were frequent periods when demand could not be met. The population had outgrown native sources of supply, and now depended largely upon its wheat-producing neighbours. An important trade had thus grown up between Rome and Alexandria, and Augustus, the master of Egypt, was in a position to keep her exports of corn in his own hands. It was a sagacious policy : for matters had come then to such a pass in Rome, that no ruler could expect to maintain his authority, unless he provided the people with an ample and unfailing supply of food. Such were the reasons which led to Egypt becoming the appanage of a throne, in place of a province of an Empire.

Under the judicious rule of the first prefects, Egypt settled down to Augustan government. It was not an unhappy page of her history. The Roman legions completed the subjugation of the country as far as the First Cataract, and established posts in the distant Sudan : the Roman administrators conducted their business with strict and impartial justice. Here and there the garrison was called upon to exact obedience to authority, here and there the prefect was compelled to tighten procedure, notably in the payment of taxes. Rome would accept no excuse for arrears of tribute, and detachments of soldiers soon brought to reason a nome or district that delayed its payments. In return the Egyptian profited from settled government. His life and crops were safe, his obligations towards the State were fixed, the productivity of his land was increased by more scientific methods of agriculture, and the development of his local

industries was encouraged. But there was another and less agreeable aspect. The sense of independence, which the Egyptian had once enjoyed, was gone. He was now a slave, the chattel of a mysterious personality in distant Rome. The more enlightened emperors visited Egypt to investigate conditions for themselves, and some even endeavoured to sweeten an alien rule by concession to local prejudice. Titus and Domitian acknowledged the sanctity of the local gods, Trajan surrendered part of the corn intended for Rome to the famished population, Hadrian patronized architecture and learning, and Severus restored to Alexandria the privilege of local government. But these gestures were the hasty inspiration of the moment: war or disturbance always stopped the introduction of radical reform. The Jews of Palestine in A.D. 115, throwing off their allegiance, marched against Egypt, and besieged Alexandria: the priest Isodaurus incited newly formed Egyptian levies to surprise the Roman garrison. That insurrection cost Egypt dear. Her land was laid waste, her prosperity checked.

Little by little Egypt was drawn into the disputes, that racked Rome on the death of each emperor, and rival pretenders to the throne made use of her as a pawn in the game. Into these contests the people of Alexandria flung themselves with their customary love of quarrel, and on one occasion set up a candidate of their own.[1] To the confusion within was added peril without. The Blemmyes, the inhabitants of Nubia, attacked from the south, the Palmyrenes from the east. Palmyra, a vassal state of Rome, was aspiring to independence, and Zenobia, in the course of the campaign, marched upon Egypt in A.D. 268. Before the fierce attack of Zabdas, her general, the Roman garrison evacuated Alexandria. But the triumph of Zabdas was short-lived, and the invader was driven back. More trouble was in store for the Roman. Hardly had he accomplished the destruction of Zenobia than he was again on the march to Egypt. There Firmus, a wealthy merchant, thinking to find his opportunity in the pre-occupation of Aurelian with Palmyra, raised the standard of revolt. Placing himself at the head of irregulars recruited from the borders of the Red Sea, he advanced from Syria on Alexandria, and in A.D. 273 pro-

[1] Marcus Julius Aurelianus, prefect of Egypt, A.D. 262.

claimed himself emperor of Egypt, and an independent sovereign. His rule was short. Against the vigorous offensive of the Roman soldier, the ill-armed Arabs broke in disorder, and Firmus was captured and put to death. The campaign brought misery upon Egypt: there was a general rise in prices. From it the cultivator drew no profit: the Roman government took their share of production in measure, not in value. It became hardly worth the peasant's while in these circumstances to farm, and one-sixth of the soil passed out of cultivation. There was other evidence of the impoverishment of the country.[1] The coinage grew debased, the canals went uncleared of silt. Nor was the wretchedness relieved by reduction in the sum of the tribute. It was little likely that Rome would consent at this moment to lighten Egypt's burden: the Imperial government needed all their resources. A momentous change had recently taken place within the Empire. Its extent and difficulties of communication called for a division of authority, and Diocletian, succeeding to the purple in A.D. 284, invited three colleagues to share imperial responsibilities. The division was unpopular with the people. In place of one court and one administration, there were now four, and the taxable capacity of the trader and agriculturist was severely strained to support the cost. Stung by exaction, northern Africa took up arms. Diocletian hurried to Egypt, where the prefect Achilleus had rashly proclaimed himself Cæsar. Alexandria was invested and after a stout resistance surrendered at discretion. Her defenders had better have died fighting at their posts: the Roman was in no mood to show mercy. From Alexandria, Diocletian pushed on to Upper Egypt. The ancient and wealthy cities of Busiris and Coptos felt the weight of his hands. Their walls were demolished, their homes were burnt, and the male inhabitants put to the sword, or sent into exile.[2] Having thus chastised the enemy, he turned to a study of

[1] J. G. Milne, in a *History of Egypt under Roman Rule* (Methuen, London, 1898), gives an excellent picture of the state of Egypt at this period (page 82).

[2] Of these exploits Gibbon remarks: "The character of the Egyptian nation, insensible to kindness, but extremely susceptible to fear, could alone justify this excessive rigour." (Chapter XIII, Vol. I, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*)

the administration. He reformed the currency, he lightened the incidence of taxation, and introduced other remedial measures. His sincerity cannot be questioned: but his endeavour to win the confidence of the Egyptian people failed through a savage persecution of Christianity. It was then too late to win Egypt back to paganism. The seed sown by St. Mark [1] had ripened, and his doctrines had spread. Alexandria early embraced the new faith, the Delta and Upper Egypt slowly followed its example. Long before the birth of Diocletian, vast numbers of Egyptians openly professed Christianity. Old men fled to the desert to repent of their sins, and youth flocked to schools of theology to study the teaching of Christ. Neither persecution nor persuasion would move these converts. Their inflexible character was proof against both, and they spurned the Roman prefect's suggestion to grant Diocletian a title of divinity.

When the Emperor Constantine transferred his seat of government to Byzantium, Egypt passed under the control of the new capital. Christianity became the recognized religion of the throne, and Egypt was made a diocese of the Empire. But the Church in Egypt was already divided upon a cardinal point of doctrine, and men were disputing over the relationship of God the Father and God the Son. Little Christian charity marked the early or late stages of this controversy: the fathers of the Church reviled the teaching of their rivals, and embittered public opinion. Each appealed to Cæsar. But Constantine was no theologian, and left the bishops to settle their own differences. They could not do so, and taking advantage of the Edicts of Julian the Apostate, unconvinced Egypt re-established paganism, until Theodosius formally forbade its practice. Schism in the Church now threatened the stability of government throughout Egypt. Constantine the Great had made of that country a diocese divided into six provinces, and permitted the bishops to exercise a wide measure of control over Egyptian administration. It was a generous concession to Egyptian sentiment that worked smoothly enough, until the churches of Constantinople and Alexandria disagreed on doctrine. Then the bishops of Egypt, wholly occupied in the

[1] St. Mark came to Egypt about A.D. 43.

dispute, gave no time to the settlement of temporal business, let injustice and corruption prevail, taxes remain unpaid, and the Thebaid become a centre of sedition. Trade suffered from the universal confusion. Alexandria shrank in importance, and rival ports threatened its ancient supremacy in the Levant. The Emperor Justinian, seeking to purge the administration of its weaknesses and defects, endeavoured to reconcile the interests of the empire with the prejudices of the Egyptian church. But the experiment was unsuccessful, and Justinian became convinced that the supporters of the Church were the enemies of the throne. His judgment was no doubt correct. Between the congregations of the church of Constantinople, and the adherents of the church of Egypt, there existed irreconcilable enmity. The Egyptian priesthood and laity were monophysite ; the governing classes, Byzantine in spirit if not by birth, were melchites.[1] It was a division that no compromise could bridge : for the first fought not only for religious but political freedom, while the second sustained the cause of the empire. The dispute, in short, had lost its primitive significance. Justinian resolved to crush it by persecution. He invested Apollonarius with the double office of patriarch and prefect, and bade him cleanse Egypt of heresy and revolution. The Imperial delegate went about the business with a will. He put to death the more influential opponents, and countenanced a reign of terror throughout Egypt. But he could not repress the national spirit, nor persuade Egyptians to abandon their beliefs. As time moved on, they sought every occasion to make common cause with the foes of the Empire. They threw in their lot with Heraclius, when that pretender took up arms against the Emperor Phocas, they assisted his confederate Niketas. The triumph of Heraclius arrested the campaign of persecution, and Egypt enjoyed an unaccustomed peace. It was rudely broken by a Persian incursion in A.D. 619. Alexandria made a brave resistance, and the Persian vented his disappointment at the unexpected check upon an unoffending countryside. Priests and their con-

[1] Or Emperor's party. Gibbon in Chapter XLVII of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* defines the Melchites as " men whose faith . . . had been established and was still maintained by the arbitrary power of a temporal monarch."

gregations were put to the sword, monasteries and churches were sacked and burnt. Stung by the news, Heraclius crossed the Bosphorus to carry the war into the enemy's country. His strategy was boldly conceived. He cut the Persian centre, and penetrated into the heart of Asia, obliging the enemy to evacuate Egypt and Armenia, and to fall back upon Ctesiphon. There in A.D. 627 Heraclius caught the enemy and overwhelmed him. It was the climax of his career, the crowning achievement of his adventurous life. Elated by the triumph, he thought the opportunity favourable to compose the dispute that was threatening Christian unity. To Egypt, therefore, came Cyrus, archbishop and prefect, as a missioner of peace. But his overtures were scouted and his doctrines contemptuously rejected. The Egyptian church would have no communion or compromise with the Byzantine. Incensed by failure, Cyrus began a fresh campaign of persecution. Benjamin, the Egyptian patriarch, by prudent flight escaped his wrath : but Cyrus took a fearful revenge upon the priests, who stayed to minister to their congregations.[1] His violence cost the empire dear : it alienated the last remnant of loyalty to Constantinople. History now was about to repeat itself. A thousand years before, the Egyptian people had welcomed a stranger that he might deliver them from a hated alien rule : they prepared themselves again to submit to the same hazardous experiment. The opportunity was at hand. A new and formidable Power had arisen in the East, and to the advance of Islam, Egypt offered no opposition.

[1] Chapter XIII, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt* (Clarendon Press, 1902), by A. J. Butler.

CHAPTER II

SATRAPY

It is doubtful whether Mohammed ever conceived the world as his heritage, or bequeathed that ideal to his successors. When he spoke, he spoke to Arab ears alone : he neither desired communion with other people, nor wished to extend his gospel beyond the boundaries of the Arabian peninsula. Nor is there any reason to suppose that Abu Bekhr, the first caliph, desired to depart from Mohammed's practice : but his claim to the succession was challenged, and many tribes and families openly refused to acknowledge his right to rule. The practice of Islam had become too austere for them, and taking advantage of Mohammed's death, they broke into revolt. The fighting that followed reduced Arabia to submission but it also brought the commonwealth into contact with the outer world. The Byzantine empire blocked the caliph's pursuit of the fugitives. Though its rule was then of great magnitude, embracing the rich provinces of Asia Minor, the fertile countries of Syria, and Palestine, and the region west of Mesopotamia, the Arabs joined issue with this mighty power, and in A.D. 634 fought a decisive battle on the banks of the Germuz, a tributary of the river Jordan. The victory was complete. The legions of Heraclius wavered and broke : the subjugation of Cilicia, Syria and Palestine followed. Abu Bekhr died within two years of his succession, and Omar reigned as caliph in his place. Insensibly the simple design of the Prophet became obscured, and lust of conquest supplanted it. The new caliph rated Arab blood so high, that he conceded to less fortunate men hardly more than the bare right to live. Authority and booty in his judgment were the prerogatives of the Arab race alone. As Islam outgrew its original narrow limits, Omar was forced to abate these pretensions. Valour

less than piety began to influence his choice of commanders, and apostates were welcomed to the army.

The army campaigns in Syria and in Palestine had gone well for Islam, and in the fifth year of the caliphate of Omar, Amr Ibn el As was firmly established in the latter country. He was an Arab. Ambitious of distinction, and tiring of his inactivity, he turned a roving eye upon Egypt. He knew something of the country and its resources, and he thought of the valley of the Nile as a profitable and tempting spoil. Its produce would feed the people of Arabia, its wealth replenish the treasury of the caliphate, and the pacific temper of its inhabitants made serious resistance unlikely. With these and analogous arguments, he strove to convince Omar of the advantage of the enterprise : but the latter knew the impetuous spirit of his lieutenant, and hesitated to give consent.[1] He was finally persuaded, and Amr set out from Gaza in the closing weeks of the year 638. It seemed a hazardous adventure even for that daring leader. He could count upon no more than 4,000 lances, and with that slender force he proposed the descent upon a province of the Byzantine empire. But Amr's prospects of success were more favourable than a hasty survey of the situation would suggest. There were many factors to encourage him. Alexandria, then the capital of Egypt, was distracted by internal jealousies. The country was rent with religious and political differences, and the Imperial garrison, scattered for administrative reasons over a wide area, was at a tactical disadvantage. Thus confident of success Amr began his advance. He was not disappointed. The persecution practised by Cyrus had prepared the way, and the Egyptian people offered no opposition to the invader.

The Arab march across Sinai was uneventful : but Pelusium, the frontier town of Egypt, cost the invader thirty days of siege to reduce. Following the capitulation of its garrison, Amr advanced leisurely upon Belbeis. There he met with further resistance, until the Byzantine troops hurriedly

[1] So uncertain was the caliph that he pursued Amr with his fears. "If you are still in Syria," he wrote to his lieutenant, "retreat without delay : but if at the receipt of this epistle, you have already reached the frontiers of Egypt, advance with confidence and depend upon the succour of God and of your brethren."

broke off touch, and retired upon Babylon.[1] That fortress, traced originally by the Emperor Trajan about A.D. 100, was a place of considerable strength, covering the town of Misr, a little north of Memphis. The Arab spearmen could make no impression upon its walls, and Amr's situation became critical. He had received no reinforcements, and this check disconcerted him. His troops required repose, he himself breathing time to reshape the plan of campaign. He thereupon conceived the bold stroke of transferring operations to the Fayum, a province weakly held. He crossed the Nile, and establishing himself to the south-west of Memphis, he waited, until news of the approach of reinforcements from Arabia came to his ears. He put his fortune again to the test. Turning northwards, he recrossed the river under the eyes of the enemy, and accomplished a junction of the two forces. He was now in a position to invest Babylon, and its defenders, in alarm, showed at last some initiative. Encouraged by the presence of Cyrus, and Theodore the commander-in-chief, the garrison left their entrenchments, and gave battle to Amr near Heliopolis. The combat ended in victory for Arab arms : Theodore fled, Cyrus and the survivors were driven back on Babylon. Cyrus thought the moment ripe to ask the Arab terms. They were uncompromising enough : Islam with brotherhood and equality, payment of tribute and protection in humiliating conditions, or war to a finish.[2] It was an embarrassing choice, but on the understanding that Egypt would enjoy rights of inheritance and possession of her churches, Cyrus consented to the second condition. The Emperor Heraclius was of another mind. He refused to ratify this convention, recalled Cyrus to Constantinople, and sternly commanded his troops to continue the struggle. So fighting began again round Babylon, and the beleaguered garrison set their hopes of relief upon Theodore in Alexandria. That commander, following the battle of Heliopolis, had raised a fresh army, and begun his march southward. He won a minor success or two : but his raw levies had no stomach for fighting, and their ranks were thinned by desertion. Meanwhile stout-hearted Babylon still held out, until news of the death of the Emperor filled

[1] Now the district known as Old Cairo.

[2] See Chapter XVIII, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt*, by Butler.

the defenders with dismay. The end was not long in coming. On the 6th April, A.D. 641, the Arabs delivered a final assault, and the garrison capitulated on honourable terms.

Cyrus has not escaped censure. He has been accused of incompetency and indicted for treason. A more dispassionate survey scarcely warrants these sweeping judgments. His first overtures to Amr were, no doubt, suspicious, and from a military point of view premature. The enemy had not breached the walls of Babylon, nor had the Arabs made impression upon the defence. But Cyrus was anxiously watching for a sign from the people of Egypt. Their attitude was still uncertain. So far they had inclined to neither side : but that neutrality could be interpreted in two ways, and Cyrus had no good cause to think that it would lean to him. The unpopularity of Byzantine rule in Egypt was manifest, and another defeat in the field might drive the people into the arms of the invader. It was a risk that the prudent archbishop and prefect could not afford to take, and he endeavoured to persuade Amr to retire upon Palestine. The negotiations failed, but there seems no reason to attribute that misfortune to treachery on the part of Cyrus. More probably the conviction that nothing else would save Egypt to the empire inspired his action. On his return a few months later from Constantinople, whither he had gone to account for his conduct, the situation had become more menacing. Dissension reigned in Alexandria, and Theodore, the commander-in-chief, with difficulty maintained his authority. The fall of Babylon had opened the road to Alexandria, and left Amr at liberty to mature his plans for the capture of the capital of Egypt. He had no time to lose. It was now the end of April, and in less than four months the Nile would be in flood, and the Delta become impassable. Impressed by this knowledge, Amr set his troops in motion, and advanced upon Nikiou, a town lying twenty miles north of modern Cairo. It was strongly held, and Theodore, the commander-in-chief, may well have expected the garrison to delay the Arab march. That anticipation was unfulfilled, and taking advantage of this good fortune, Amr pressed on to the chain of forts, that then covered Alexandria. There his victorious progress was checked. Theodore, a match

for the Arab in numbers, had command of the sea, and was prepared to stand a siege of indefinite duration. So Amr, perplexed, returned to Babylon, and occupied himself with the subjugation of the Delta and of Upper Egypt. His success had been only partial, when fortune again came to his aid. Dissension had become more acute in Alexandria, Theodore urging resistance, Cyrus convinced of its futility. The dispute spread to the provinces, and local authority sided with one faction or the other. Byzantine authority was at an end, and Cyrus again approached Amr. He was more successful on this occasion, and the pair signed a treaty of peace on the 8th November, A.D. 641. It left the Arabs masters of Egypt.[1]

Amr honourably endeavoured to carry out the spirit as well as the letter of the engagement. He maintained a prudent neutrality between the rival parties of the Christian Church, he extended his favour impartially to the leaders of both. He made little change in the forms of government.[2] The Arab people of this period knew nothing of the arts of peace. They were fighters, not administrators, and Amr left the administration largely in the hands of the Greeks and Egyptians, who had served the Byzantine empire. It was a prudent policy that well repaid the conquerors. Alexandria alone fell into disgrace, and Fostat, site of the present city of Cairo, became the new seat of government. Amr's belief in the wealth of Egypt was soon justified. During the first three years of his rule, the poll tax rose from one million dinars to eight,[3] and yet the inhabitants of

[1] Butler, on the authority of John of Nikiou, summarizes the conditions of the Treaty as follows: (i) payment of a tribute; (ii) the Arab armies to maintain their positions for eleven months, during which period the Byzantine troops would evacuate the country; (iii) the Arab conquest to remain undisturbed; (iv) religious freedom to be accorded to all Christians; (v) Jews to remain in Alexandria. (Chapter XXI, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt.*)

[2] At the time of the Arab conquest, Lower Egypt for administrative purposes was divided into two Eparchies, or Dioceses, known as the Augustan and the Egyptian. 'Amr replaced the Greek with Arabic titles, the Augustan Eparchy becoming El Hauf and the Egyptian El Rif; in other respects he left the organization as he found it. (*La Geographie de l'Egypte à l'Epoque Arabe*, by Prince Omar Tussun, L'Institut Français, Cairo, 1926.)

[3] *A History of Egypt: the Middle Ages*, by Stanley Lane Poole (Unwin, London, 1900).

Egypt prospered. The Arab milked the cow, but forbore to dry the udders. New canals and drains increased the productivity of the soil, a channel cut by a Ptolemy and deepened by Trajan, leading from the Nile to the Red Sea, was reopened. But Medina grew suspicious of Amr's power, and recalled him. He went obediently, and for fifteen years remained in retirement. Then a turn of fortune's wheel sent him back.

In Arabia, Othman had succeeded to the caliphate. It was not a fortunate choice for Islam, and, under his vacillating rule, unity vanished. Tribal jealousy became acute. On one side were ranged the haughty Koreish, on the other the rest of Arabia. There was discord also even among the Koreish. Families spoke bitterly of their neighbours, and the house of Hashim looked askance at the Ummeiyad. Arabia was in agreement only in dislike of Othman. Ali, husband of Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, led the revolt: Othman was murdered, and Ali became caliph in the dead man's place. But the election was none too well received. Basra would not acknowledge the regicide; Syria, led by Muawiya, declared against him. It was a melancholy judgment upon Mohammed's vain belief in brotherhood. Islam was divided in herself, and Moslems were at one another's throats. The first success went to Ali. Basra fell, and the victor began his march upon Syria. But there he was to meet an enemy of different calibre. Muawiya had consolidated his conquest of this province by a wise and forbearing rule, and all Syria stood at his back. At the last moment prudent councils prevailed, and the rival commanders declared a truce. Muawiya was left in possession of his domain, and Ali retreated to Basra. He was well advised to do so: for Egypt sided with his rival, and threatened his flank. Amr, the trusted friend of Muawiya, was restored to Egypt.

On the death of Ali, Islam came together and Muawiya, now caliph, transferred the seat of authority to Damascus. Discretion continued to distinguish his government, until he forced his son Yezid upon the people. Syria and Egypt accepted the decision, Mecca loudly protested. Its people held to the ancient custom of election, and Muawiya had recourse to the sword to compel obedience. The precepts of

Mohammed were then fading from men's recollection, and in the pursuit of wealth and power, they forgot the spirit of his teaching. Idolatry was no longer banned, and conversion had lost its former significance. None the less under the Ummeiyad dynasty, founded by Muawiya in A.D. 661 and closed by the death of Merwan II in 744, Islam reached her greatest temporal prosperity. The caliphs of the period held a fair balance between the tribes, and tempered the rule of distant provinces to the customs and characteristics of the inhabitants. Their influence stretched from China to the Atlantic Ocean, and within the boundaries of that vast territory, the word of Islam passed as law.

Egypt did not share in this happy state of things. All trace of her ancient civilization had disappeared, and beneath the débris lay buried the civic and political ideas that distinguished the ages of the Pharaohs. Amr's tolerant rule temporarily checked the process of decay, begun during the reign of the Ptolemies, and continued under the rule of prefects of the Byzantine empire : then imperative calls for more money drove his successors to tighten the incidence of Arab sway. Taxation grew heavier, and to prevent evasion a census of the population was taken, and the privileges hitherto accorded to the Christian priesthood were withdrawn. They were unpopular measures and rather than submit to them, numbers of families took refuge in the desert. The spirit of defiance to Islam grew, until actual insurrection broke out. In vain the caliphs endeavoured to crush resistance by planting colonies of Arabs in the Delta, and forbidding the movement of Egyptians from village to village. It was to no purpose. Hardly was revolt in one district suppressed, than its counterpart appeared in a second.[1] For a century or more disorder prevailed. Then the Caliph Mamun, hastening from Syria in A.D. 830, cured Egypt of a taste for sedition. From then onwards the history of the Christian community is a melancholy story of misfortune and oppression. If the Egyptian did not suffer martyrdom on account of his faith, he paid heavily in other ways for the escape. Islam extinguished his sense of nationalism, and excluded him from government.

[1] In an exhaustive article upon K I B T (*Dictionary of Islam*, Leipsic, 1927), E. Wiet chronicles half a dozen instances.

None the less Arab rule was a relief after the corrupt and officious practices of Constantinople. Taxation was higher, but the rich now paid their share of it. Sectarian persecution had ceased, and the Egyptian was at liberty to follow the doctrine of his own choice. If the Arab inclined before the Crescent, the Christian was free to adore the Cross. Religious communities managed their own local business. The clergy were the acknowledged leaders of the people, and through them the Arab administration communicated its desires. It was a procedure which corresponded with Moslem ideals : for Islam is a theocratic organization, wherein the temporal chief is also spiritual chief, commander of all believers, supreme judge upon earth, and expositor of the Koran. In the years that followed, unbroken calm reigned over the land. The Sudan no longer raided the frontier, and even Alexandria, humbled by subjection, held its peace. It would be little surprising in these conditions, if Egypt did not turn spiritually to the Power that ruled. Other influences hastened the process of conversion. Intermarriage was one. Of the army that each governor brought with him, there were always some members unwilling to return. They had taken Egyptian women to wife, and were bringing up their offspring in the faith of Islam. The relief that the Moslem convert enjoyed from certain forms of taxation was a second and stronger temptation to every Christian to deny his faith. Only the more courageous stood their ground. Their cross was a heavy burden : for the sum of the tax remained the same, however reduced in number the Egyptians who bore it.[1] The wonder perhaps is less that Egypt embraced Islam, than that any people clung to their ancient faith. When and why Egypt adopted Arabic as her national language is a more puzzling subject of speculation. There seems no very obvious answer, and the scanty records of the period do not help the inquirer. Intermarriage and

[1] The ex-Christian paid as tithe one-tenth of the gross produce of his land, and one-fortieth of his net income as alms : those who refused to abjure their faith, paid a tribute of twenty to fifty per cent. of the produce and a poll tax from twelve to forty-eight drachmas of silver. All Egyptians were required to provide soldiers of the army of occupation with free food and lodging for the space of three days. Hence comes the well-known Egyptian proverb, "I cannot support rain or a guest for more than three days."

attendance at the mosque must have contributed to the spread of Arabic, but can hardly have been responsible for the extinction of the Coptic tongue. It is desirable to remember that there was no Arab invasion of Egypt in the widest sense of the word.[1] Conquest and occupation more fittingly describe this period of history. The garrison came and went with each individual governor, and it would be more natural to expect that his soldiers, who had married Egyptian women, would return with their wives to Arabia, rather than settle permanently in Egypt. Arabia is a land sparsely populated, and the caliphs, far from encouraging migration of the tribes, must have regarded any exodus of the fighting classes as a misfortune.[1] Nor is it reasonable to believe that Egyptians adopted Arabic as their common tongue solely through conversion to Islam. The many millions of people who profess the same faith in Asia have not done so, and are not held of less account. The curious inquirer must therefore seek another explanation. It is difficult to suggest one that will dissolve his uncertainty : it is even unknown what language was generally spoken in Egypt at the time of Amr's descent.[2] The people of Alexandria no doubt talked a corrupt form of Greek, and the inhabitants of the Delta and of Upper Egypt the old Coptic tongue. On the other hand, it is clear that more than one caliph endeavoured to make the use of Arabic general throughout his dominions.[3] The ambition was legitimate

[1] No doubt limited migration occasionally occurred. Lane Poole in his *Story of Cairo* (*Mediæval Towns* series : Dent & Co., London, 1902) on page 60 quotes an instance of 5,000 Arabs settling in the Delta at the command of a Governor, " despairing of any considerable accession of native Egyptians to the Muslim ranks."

[2] The theory that Egyptians in common with the inhabitants of Syria, Palestine and Malta spoke Punic or Phœnician, a sister language of Arabic, centuries before Christ, is attractive but does not find general acceptance. The arguments in its favour, too long and too numerous to reproduce in this footnote, may be read in Sir William Willcocks' pamphlet, *Syria, Egypt, North Africa and Malta speak Punic not Arabic* (Imprimerie l'Institut Français, Cairo, 1926).

[3] R. A. Nicholson, page 200, third impression of *A Literary History of the Arabs* (Fisher Unwin, London, 1923), in describing the rule of Abdul Malik, caliph in the year A.D. 685, says of him that " he made Arabic, instead of Greek or Persian, the official language of financial administration in all Moslem lands."

enough. But no decree or law can force a people to abandon their national language, and it is doubtful how far such efforts in Egypt succeeded. More probably several centuries passed before Arabic finally supplanted Coptic,[1] and Islam displaced Christianity. From the first Arabic was naturally the language of the court, as Islam was its faith. But Egypt probably clung to her ancient speech, until Beduin migrations from Arabia on a larger scale during the Mameluke and Turkish occupations forced her people to abandon it.

In the course of the eighth century, there issued from Arabia a challenge to the Ummeiyads. It was a claim made by Mohammed, great-grandson of Abbas, and member of the rival house of Hashim, to the caliphate. To gain his end, the pretender joined forces with the descendants of Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet, and boldly proclaimed that descent from the Prophet alone qualified a candidature for the office. The conspiracy gained strength, as the decadence of the house of Ummeiya grew more pronounced. Merwan, last of that stock, strove in vain to repair his declining fortunes, and pressed his lieutenant in Spain to carry war into France. It was a brilliant campaign. All Provence submitted to the Arab arms: Paris herself was threatened. But the tide turned, and Charles IX, meeting the invader near Tours in the autumn of the year 732, threw him back into Spain. Merwan never recovered from the disaster. Revolt followed in Khorasan, and Abu Muslim took the field against the caliph. With great discretion Abu Muslim declined to identify himself either with the party of Ali, or with that of Mohammed: he fought under the banner[2] of Hashim, the common ancestor of both. His troops pursued Merwan from Damascus to Egypt, and there put him to death. So fell the Ummeiyad dynasty.

The Abbasid family succeeded: but they had lost part of the inheritance of Islam. Spain did not acknowledge their

[1] The researches of Messrs. Winlock, Crum, and Evelyn White seem to indicate that Coptic had largely replaced Greek in Egyptian monkish communities at the beginning of the seventh century. (*The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes, New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.* London: Quaritch, 1926.)

[2] Black in colour, like that of the Prophet. The Ummeiyads and Alids favoured white. (See Chapter LIX, *The Caliphate, Rise, Decline and Fall.*)

sovereignty: neither did northern Africa, Egypt excepted. The new caliphs were not in a position to impose their authority, or recall the old enthusiasm for union in Islam. The spirit was gone. The Arab people would no longer fight, and the caliph filled the ranks of his army with levies from Persia and Khorasan. The tribes had abandoned themselves to pride and luxury, and the Arab was no longer a potential conqueror of the world. The tribesmen kept away from the court, and their place was filled by a company of strangers, whose fidelity depended upon promotion and booty. It was a slender foundation to support an Empire.

For awhile Egypt escaped the prevailing infection: but her immunity did not last long. Ahmed Ibn El Tulun,[1] Turkoman and soldier of fortune, seized the reins of government and ruled as an independent prince. In his capable hands, Egypt recovered part of her ancient glory. Syria fell to his arms, Mesopotamia submitted to his authority. The Egyptians, labouring under a burden of taxation that had yearly grown heavier,[2] rejoiced at their escape from the caliphate. Their satisfaction was intelligible: Ibn El Tulun was as much a master of the ways of peace as the ways of war. He reformed the administration, he purged it of abuses. He built a great mosque, a becoming memory of his passion for the magnificent. He designed public works worthy to be ranked with Roman achievement. He established a hospital, he opened public baths, supporting their upkeep from his private purse. It was then that the jealous caliph in Baghdad sought to expel this rival to his authority. He had better have left Ibn El Tulun alone. Discarding pretence, the daring Governor now renounced his allegiance to the Abbasid house, and proclaimed himself Sultan of Egypt. He had chosen an opportune moment: for Islam was at an ominous point in her fortunes. Three separate dynasties were then contending for a supremacy hitherto exercised by one. The Ummeiyads were caliphs in Spain, the Abbasids in Baghdad, and the Fatimids in Kairouan.

[1] A.D. 868–883.

[2] In addition to the kharadji, or land tax, others had been introduced. There was the miri, or tax upon waste land, and taxes upon dates, vegetables and produce generally. Christians also still paid the poll tax.

But the house of Tulun did not hold Egypt for long; following a succession of usurpers, the sovereignty in A.D. 969 passed to the Fatimids, a family tracing descent from the Prophet through his daughter. The claim of Gohar, the conqueror, to a place in the history of Egypt, rests upon his creation of a new capital. It was the modern Cairo. Many conquerors of Egypt have thought to strengthen their rule, and perpetuate their memory by a similar decision: but not all have been as successful as Gohar. The Persian transferred the seat of government from Thebes to Memphis: the Greek went to Alexandria, the Arab to Fustat: but the ambition of each has come to naught. Alexandria remains a centre of commerce, shorn of her former splendour: Memphis and Fustat, less happy, have vanished. The Fatimids governed with prudent moderation, and Egypt profited by their rule. But as the vigour of the family declined, Viziers disputed with Sultans authority over the land. Matters came to a head in the reign of Adil, the last Fatimid sovereign of Egypt, when Aleppo supported one pretender to the post of Vizier, and Jerusalem another. Victory rested with the first, and Saladin, son of Ayub, a native of Kurdistan, was left in possession. On the death of Adil, in 1171, he became sovereign by favour of the caliph of Baghdad, and repaid the debt by restoring the latter's spiritual supremacy in Egypt.

He was more at home in the camp than in the council chamber, and his hand fell heavily upon the Egyptian people. He respected their susceptibilities, but he looked to them for the means of making war. His campaigns in the Holy Land cost Egypt dear. Taxation grew increasingly heavy, until the whole country groaned under the burden. But Saladin was deaf to appeal. He had captured Jerusalem: he was soon himself in turn beleaguered, and only division in the ranks of the enemy saved him from capitulation. Richard Cœur de Lion, anxious to return to England, would have raised the siege, but his companions in arms panted to deliver a fresh assault. Ill and uneasy, Saladin took advantage of the dissension to propose a truce, that developed into a treaty. The holy city remained in Moslem hands, but Christian pilgrims were henceforth at liberty to visit unmolested the birthplace of their Saviour. It was

the last triumph of Saladin. He went to Damascus and there died. His successful conduct of war was largely due to the employment of soldiers, who embraced Islam either to save their lives, or enrich themselves with booty. It was a practice on the part of sultans and sovereigns significant of the decadence of Islam. Saladin recruited and used the material sparingly: his descendants were less judicious. Tartar invaders of Asia Minor had driven before them the inhabitants of the Caucasus and the shores of the Caspian Sea, and the fugitives had sheltered in Syria and Mesopotamia. Upon these unfortunate refugees the slave dealer pounced. His was then a profitable trade, for every princelet of western and southern Asia was in the market as a buyer. Slavery was an honourable institution,[1] discrediting neither master nor servant, and the victim of the practice was usually happy enough to exchange a precarious for a settled livelihood. He made an admirable soldier, as the Crusader discovered to his cost. But Saladin's successors on the throne leant too heavily upon the prowess and fidelity of their Mameluke [2] guards. They departed from his prudent rules, increasing the number of Mamelukes in their armies, and disregarding the growth of a haughty and arrogant spirit in the ranks. It was a grievous error of judgment, and the fate that befell Baghdad, descended also upon Egypt. Her sultans endeavoured to stave off catastrophe by granting the mutinous troops rights and privileges, which belonged more properly to the civilian population: but the surrender only awoke an appetite for fresh concession. Before long the Mameluke beys and emirs had seized upon the great offices of the State, and finally lodged themselves and their dependents in spacious cantonments on the island of Roda, a suburb of modern Cairo. From that fastness guarded by the Nile on each flank, they issued their orders and made good their supremacy. But the dynasty of Ayub

[1] "The circumstance of slavery was so far from a stigma that we find a celebrated Emir (Kawsun) looked at askance, solely because he had not been a slave, and the relationship of slave to master in the East has always approached kinship rather than servitude." (Chapter IX, *A History of Egypt: the Middle Ages*, by Stanley Lane Poole.)

[2] Past participle of the Arabic verb *malaka*, signifying to own or possess. Thus *melek* is master, *memluk* slave.

was approaching its end. Saladin's death had thrown the Empire into confusion, and in place of one sultan, there were now three. Aleppo, Damascus and Cairo acknowledged different rulers. This division of authority was the signal for fresh war. Taking advantage of the opportunity, Europe sent crusade after crusade to the East. Palestine and Egypt bent to the storm. The strongholds of the first fell to the Christian arms, the seaports of Egypt passed into their possession. Desperate and bloody campaigns followed, with indecisive result, until the kings and princes of Europe, incensed at resistance, equipped in 1245 a more formidable host under the leadership of Louis IX of France. Damietta was retaken and the invaders set out for Cairo. But Melek El Sala, sultan of Egypt, barred the way at Mansura, and Turanshah, his son, was hurrying from Syria with assistance. It was a last despairing effort. The Christian troops gave way, and Louis retreated upon Farescour, where with the remnants of his army he surrendered. El Sala did not live to see the victory, and Turanshah reigned in his place. He was a hot-headed prince. Elated with his triumph over the invader, he determined to break the spirit of the Mamelukes. He put to death some, he deprived others of their offices and ranks. It was a fatal error of judgment. Virtually masters of Egypt, the Mamelukes had the measure of their ruler, and at the bidding of Bibars, one of their number, they slew Turanshah at Farescour on the 4th of May, 1250.

The succession passed not to Bibars, of whose ascendancy his fellows were jealous, but to Shagrat El Dur, mother or stepmother of the murdered prince. It was a singular choice, contrary to the spirit of Islam, and repugnant to orthodox and unorthodox Moslems. No woman had yet reigned over a Mohammedan community, and the caliph in Baghdad indignantly declined to confirm the election. Shagrat El Dur marked his ominous refusal, and prudently invited a man to share her responsibilities. Her choice fell upon Ized Din Ybek, guardian of the heir. The union split the Mamelukes, and the garrison of Syria remaining faithful to the house of Ayub, made overtures to the crusaders. But their comrades in Egypt got wind of the manœuvre, and offered better terms. In the campaign that followed, the Syrian contingent was worsted, and Ybek acknowledged

Sultan of Egypt. His good fortune did not last many years. Shagrat El Dur, in a fit of jealousy, caused him to be murdered, and suffered herself the same fate later at the hands of a stepson. Qutuz, another Mameluke, seized the vacant throne, and began a new era of rule in 1259. His authority was challenged at once byHuluku, grandson of Jenghiz Khan, fresh from victory over the caliph in Baghdad in A.D. 1258. From Damascus, Huluku proclaimed war upon Egypt.[1] It was a defiance that Qutuz did not brook. He sent Bibars to check the invader, and drive him back.

Meanwhile dispute had loosened the Mameluke ranks, and Bibars resolved to replace Qutuz. Elected sultan in 1260, he was the first, and perhaps the greatest, of all Mameluke rulers over Egypt. His vigorous campaigns in Palestine and Syria re-established the reputation of Egyptian arms throughout the Levant, and the kings and princes of Europe sought the friendship of this rising star. The Emperor in Constantinople, the Khan of Southern Russia, the Kings of Sicily, Aragon and France, accepted Bibars as their equal.[2] In European eyes the Mamelukes became the first line of defence against the dreaded Mongol. Bibars made an excellent sovereign. He composed domestic quarrels among the beys, he amnestied political prisoners, he abolished vexatious taxes, and he punished oppression. Through judicious government he strengthened his hold over the throne : but to make his claim unassailable, he needed the official blessing of Islam. His fertile brain soon discovered a way of obtaining it. There was then living in retirement in Damascus a descendant of the Abbasid dynasty, and to him Bibars applied. El Mustansir gladly accepted the invitation, and accompanied Bibars to Cairo. There the Sultan declared Egypt to be the seat of the caliphate, and El Mustansir and his descendants the true caliphs.

[1] The proclamation of the Mongol leader has been preserved. "Huluku Khan," it began, "whose victories are unique, whose troops are innumerable :

"O People of Egypt, do not fight against ME : your endeavours will be in vain : be warned and follow the example of the inhabitants of Aleppo and Mosul."

[2] See Historical Introduction to *The Works of Sultan Bibars Al Bunduqdari in Egypt* (Imprimerie de l'Institut Français, Cairo, 1926), by K. A. C. Creswell.

For a space of nearly three centuries one Mameluke family or another ruled in Egypt. The earlier years produced a line of sultans, who, recording their reign in monuments of brick and stone, maintained the sumptuous tradition of their Arab predecessors. They extended their favour to all forms of art and learning. Kaldun, Macrisi and many others wrote local and universal histories under Mameluke auspices, and to this period the world owes the final form of that incomparable masterpiece of literature, the *Thousand and One Nights*.[1] The later members of the race were less fortunate. They were seldom given time to bequeath imperishable pledges of their rule: death or deposition invariably cut short their tenancy of the throne. One sultan succeeded another so quickly that the historian can hardly separate their reigns.[2] The blood also had changed, and the Mamelukes of Circassian descent, who ousted the Mamelukes of Turkoman origin, did not share the ideals of their predecessors. But the policy of one seldom varied from that of another: ambition and greed inspired both. Without being traders, the Mamelukes grew rich at the expense of commerce. Sitting astride of the great trade routes between Europe and Asia, they took heavy toll of all merchandize transported across their territory. Then the discovery of the passage to India round the Cape of Good Hope diverted commerce from land to sea, and the rulers of Egypt lost the main source of their revenue. It was a blow from which the Mameluke never recovered. Yet throughout vicissitude and misfortune, he preserved his instinct for war. When the Beys were not engaged in campaigns of conquest, they quarrelled among themselves, and savagely fought out their differences. Interminable wrangling and jealousy brought about the ruin of their race, and a new and more virile people humbled them to the dust.

They were the Osmanlis, a rude but warlike people, who had swarmed over Asia Minor at the close of the fifteenth century. From the confusion, three separate Mohammedan empires came into existence, the Turkish, the Persian and

[1] See page 456, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, by R. A. Nicholson, for an account of this work.

[2] In a particular period of 152 years, there were no less than forty-seven Mameluke sultans.

the Indian.[1] Constantinople fell to the Osmanli in 1453 and the conquerors cast a jealous eye upon the territory of Moslem neighbours. Persia was the first victim, Egypt the second. Before the furious onslaught of Selim I, the Mamelukes gave way. Their sultan Ghouri admitted defeat in Syria, and Tuman Bey, last of the line, fled into Egypt. But the sun of the Mamelukes had set. Their prestige was broken, their sense of discipline was gone, and in 1517 Selim planted his standard upon the walls of Cairo. Terrible scenes of carnage and destruction followed. The city was set on fire, and its inhabitants were put to the sword. Thus did Selim punish an unoffending population for the resistance of their rulers. In vain had Tuman Bey, seeking refuge in the western desert, left El Mustawakil the caliph to make terms of peace with the victor. Selim would not listen to his prayer, and continued his savage reprisals, until lust for slaughter and pillage was satisfied. Then tiring of Egypt and her people, he departed for Constantinople.[2] El Mustawakil the caliph went with him, and Egypt lost spiritual as well as temporal dominion.

She became a province of Turkey, a political condition that lasted until 1914. It was a rule as dark and gloomy as its predecessor : between Turk and Mameluke the miserable Egyptian found nothing to choose. His situation went from bad to worse. He was the victim of dual government, a form of rule tolerable only when virtue inspires it. There was none in this unnatural alliance between Turk and Mameluke. Distrusting his lieutenants and jealous of their ambition, Selim had followed the Roman axiom *divide et impera*. There was an Osmanli viceroy, there were Mameluke provincial governors, while over both there sat a council of state, supported by an army of occupation. Suliman II consolidated the ideals of his grandfather, by creating a second consultative body, by adding fresh contingents to the garrison, and doubling the number of Mameluke officials. Europe was then emerging from the confusion of the middle

[1] See Introduction to *A Literary History of the Arabs*, by R. A. Nicholson.

[2] Kairbek, a Mameluke turncoat, became the first Governor of Egypt. His rule was short but vindictive. See page 199, *L'Egypte Musulmane* (Maisonneuve, Paris, 1926), by Mrs. R. L. Devonshire.

ages, and Suliman also desired to be thought an enlightened sovereign. But Egypt had to pay heavily for his interest in her administration. The new sultan's demands were incessant. Since tribute came in slowly, he claimed ownership of all the soil, leasing parcels of land to a few favoured individuals, who sublet in turn to the fellahin. It was a vicious system that benefited no one of the parties concerned. Provincial officials, governors and tax collectors, remorselessly squeezed concessionaires and cultivators alike. Suliman endeavoured later to remedy the evil by conferring upon the cultivators the right to bequeath their interest to religious foundations : [1] but the company of plunderers were too strong. They frustrated a cadastral survey of Egypt, and they combined with the viceroy and the council of state against sultan and tenant alike. To stop the abuse, Suliman increased the authority of the Mameluke beys, and extended his favour to all residents of Egypt, who acknowledged Turkish authority.

The measure might have succeeded, but for a sensible decline in the splendour and power of the Ottoman empire. The imperial family no longer produced princes of the calibre of the earlier sovereigns, and authority passed into the hands of court favourites. Bribery and corruption pervaded the services of the state : an undisciplined army and a bankrupt treasury completed the confusion. Europe took advantage of these signs of decay. England, France, Austria and Holland demanded privileges and rights for their nationals, while a new and formidable power, the kingdom of Russia, menaced the safety of Constantinople from the east. Egypt felt the repercussion of these disasters and the quality of her viceroys mysteriously deteriorated. They were embarrassed by the claim of the Mamelukes to a share of the spoil. The latter had maintained authority by keeping closely to themselves.[2] They entered into no alliance with Turk or Egyptian, perpetuating their line by importing children from Georgia and Circassia. Each bey surrounded himself with a body of vassals, half slaves, half warriors : and before that formidable menace, the viceroy was com-

[1] The origin in Egypt of the Wakfs.

[2] One or other bey was elected as leader under the title of *Sheikh el Balad*.

pelled to bow. More often than not, he spent his term of office a virtual prisoner, seldom venturing outside the security of the citadel of Cairo. He lived between two fires. If he attempted to exert authority, the Sultan suspected his loyalty, and recalled him in disgrace : if he endeavoured to reduce the Mamelukes to submission, he met with violent death. His only chance of escaping either fate, lay in the incessant quarrels between Mameluke and Mameluke : his only opportunity of taking action came, when the beys, sinking their private differences, burst into rebellion. That headed by the Mameluke Ali nearly achieved success. Conditions favoured his venture. In 1768 the Sultan of Turkey declared war upon Russia, and called upon Egypt to furnish a contingent of 12,000 men. Ali threw off the mask, and invited all Mamelukes to join in denouncing Turkish rule. His appeal fell on willing ears. The viceroy was expelled, and Ali marched into Syria to give battle to the Turk on his own ground. He then turned his attention to Egypt, and endeavoured to win her confidence. It was no very difficult achievement, and the Egyptians welcomed a ruler, who promised to reduce taxation, and reform abuses of government. But Ali was not content with this modest triumph. A campaign undertaken in Arabia gave him possession of the Holy places, and so stirred his vanity that he proclaimed himself Sherif of Mecca, Sultan of Egypt and King of the Mediterranean and Red Seas. He was at the height of his power, when Mohammed Abu Dahab, a favourite emir, raised the flag of revolt, and Ali was forced to fly from Cairo. Turkey never regained control over Egypt. Viceroys came and went : but the Mameluke was always their master.

Upon the cultivator fell the burden of supporting the double rule of viceroy and Mameluke. Never through centuries of humiliating servitude has Egypt suffered such misgovernment, never have her people been more oppressed. As the Turk lost authority the powerful Mameluke began to govern as he pleased. He took the labour of the fellahin, he seized the produce of their fields, and contributed nothing himself to the common stock. The viceroy responded by imposing fresh and heavier taxation. The *miri*, a tax set apart to provide for the sustenance of the army of occupation, was now stretched to cover very different purposes.

Paid in kind, it supported a plague of parasites. Favoured officials, the members of the council of state, and the viceroy himself, battened and lived upon its proceeds. Of what was left when these men had eaten their fill, part went to Mecca, the remainder to Constantinople.[1] The sovereign of Turkey did not endeavour to remedy this deplorable state of affairs. Satisfied with a minor share of the plunder, he was indifferent where the balance went.

A monotonous uniformity distinguishes these pages of this period of subjection. They begin, and end alike. There is first the rapid conquest of the country by a warlike race, who impose with the aid of an army of occupation a satrap type of government. Next is the impoverishment of the conquering race, and their incapacity to rule distant dominions. Thus the viceroy or governor is left to his own devices. Internal trouble follows. The province becomes a kingdom ; virile adventurers seize the reins of power, and found dynasties. For awhile some pretend to democratic beliefs : but in the end out of self-defence, they are driven into despotism. Egypt passed through all these stages, and the practices of polygamy and slavery still further corrupted her ideals of freedom. Men accustomed to exact from their families and dependents implicit obedience, paid in turn to the ruler the same tribute. Islam also encouraged the spirit of submission. Religious and temporal authority combined to control the State ; liberal thought and liberal institutions suffered from the process.

[1] Brehier in *L'Egypte de* 1789 *à* 1900 (Combet et Cie, Paris, 1900), on page 16, estimates the average share of the Porte at 18,000,000 francs annually.

PART II—EVOLUTION

CHAPTER III

BONAPARTE AND MOHAMMED ALI

Thus as the eighteenth century drew to a close, Egypt lay at the mercy of any Power sufficiently enterprising to snatch it from the hands of its indolent master. France took advantage of the opportunity, less with ambition to found a colonial Empire in northern Africa, than in the hope of striking a blow at English commerce. The Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797 had relieved her of anxiety in Europe, and now England, an ancient and obstinate foe, stood alone between her and dominion of the old world. Neither nation at heart perhaps desired an open rupture : the risk was too great, the uncertainties were too numerous. But abortive negotiations undertaken in Paris in 1796 and in Lille during the following year had demonstrated the improbability of maintaining peace, and each government secretly prepared for war. It was the plan of the Directory to invade England, and at this juncture Bonaparte, fresh from his triumphs in Italy, reappeared in Paris. He went to Dunkirk to examine for himself the chances of successfully transporting an army across the English channel, and pronounced against them. As an alternative he proposed a descent on Egypt.

In giving their consent to a campaign in Egypt, the Directory have been accused of desiring to put the sea between themselves and a young and successful general : but a close survey of the circumstances hardly supports that conclusion. No doubt Carnot and his colleagues were anxious enough to keep out of Paris a potential rival to their authority : but that they approved of Bonaparte's alternative

plan wholly on that account, is a less convincing theory. The idea was not new. Liebnitz had cherished and recommended it in 1672, the Duc de Choiseul had spoken of it to Louis XV a few years later, the Jacobins were dreaming of empire abroad, and Magallan, the Directory's commercial agent in Egypt, was clamouring for the despatch of an expedition. It seems therefore improbable to suppose that the Directory consented to the campaign solely from desire to put Bonaparte at a distance, or that they relinquished their own scheme willingly : [1] it is equally unlikely that they released the flower of the French army for service in the East without some misgiving. Nor is it more reasonable to assume that ambition alone inspired Bonaparte. He judged the invasion of England on its merits. The passage of a force across the straits of Dover and the capture of London were operations that offered a fair prospect of success ; but permanent occupation while England held command at sea, was less easy of accomplishment. A campaign in Egypt was a more promising alternative. If victory there would bear less fruit, failure also would be less disastrous. The capture of Egypt would not force England to her knees : but an army of France established in Cairo would undoubtedly threaten British possessions further east. There was better hope also of transporting an expedition across the Mediterranean than across the straits of Dover. The voyage would be longer, but the chance of eluding the enemy's ships greater. Bonaparte hurried forward his preparations. Rome was plundered of stores and equipment, Berne, Zurich

[1] Améd Ryme, in his *Egypte Moderne, Période de la Domination Français* (Paris, 1878), writes thus (see also articles in *La Revue de deux Mondes*, issues 1st and 15th August, 1890) :

Les discussions furent fort longues fort vives, et c'est même en ce circonstance qu'eut lieu une scène à laquelle on donne d'habitude une tout autre cause que la véritable, et dans laquelle on fait à tort figurer tantôt Rewbell tantôt Barras. Des cinq membres du Directoire, Larevellière-Lepaux se montrait le plus ardent à repousser l'expédition d'Egypte, et c'était principalement contre ses objections que Bonaparte avait à lutter. Dans un moment de dépit, Bonaparte prononça le mot de démission, " Votre démission, je suis loin de vouloir qu'on vous la donne " s'ecria Larevellière avec fermeté : " mais général " ajouta-t-il, en lui présentant une plume et du papier " signez-la, et j'opinerai pour qu'on l'accepte." (See also Chapter VIII, *Life of Napoleon*, (Bell & Sons, London, 1912), by J. H. Rose.)

and Lucerne of money. Profound secrecy was observed, and the destination of the troops kept concealed, The Directory spoke of the expedition as *L'armément de la Méditerranée*: its commander called it "*une aile de l'armée d'angleterre.*" Seldom has France sent from her shores an expedition more completely equipped. Forty thousand veterans from the Rhine and the Po, a staff of officers already distinguished in the field, and a company of civilians eminent in science, art and letters, embarked in 400 transports, and sailed from Toulon on the 19th May, 1798.

Seven weeks later the troops touched Egyptian soil. There was then no need for further secrecy, and Bonaparte signed his orders and proclamations as *général en chef de l'armée d'Egypte.* He had come, he said, to rid Egypt of oppression. It was a bold bid for support from her people: but it missed the mark. The Egyptian, in the course of his chequered history, had heard too many similar promises to believe in mere words. Wasting no time in manœuvre, Bonaparte carried the defences of Alexandria by storm, and set out for Cairo. It was a painful progress. Rejecting the banks of the Nile, an easier route, and leaving a small force to mask Rosetta, he took a short cut across the desert. The troops marched without transport, and suffered horribly from lack of food and water. Nor was that privation their only embarrassment. Parties of hostile Beduins hung on to the flank, and cut to pieces the scouts and stragglers. For security, battalions and squadrons moved in square, a formation fatiguing to the soldier and inimical to rapid marching. North of Dessuk Bonaparte met the Nile, and thenceforth clung to its banks. Wearily the force plodded on, until on the seventeenth morning of leaving Alexandria, the walls of Cairo met its view. On the left bank of the river, the Mameluke army was drawn up to receive the invader's attack. The defenders were more formidable in numbers than in experience of war. Ten thousand horse and twenty-five thousand foot made a brave show on parade, but their fighting value compared unfavourably with that of the veteran legions of France. The Mameluke cavalry had no acquaintance with modern warfare, the fellahin infantry were a simple rabble. Nor had the leaders chosen their position with discretion. The wide plain of the Pyramids offered a

convenient ground for the manœuvre of cavalry, and an entrenched camp at Embaba lent support to the infantry: but there was no line of retreat open to the latter. Between the Mameluke army and Cairo there flowed a wide and bridgeless river. Bonaparte's quick eye detected the weakness of the position, and piercing the enemy's centre, he delivered a fierce attack upon Embaba. Against the French infantry in square, the Mameluke horsemen charged until their right wing gave way. Then Embaba was carried by storm, and Cairo surrendered unconditionally three days later. Bonaparte's victory was decisive. He had redeemed one of his promises: the Mameluke power was broken.[1]

He set to work to persuade Egyptians of the innocence of his intentions. Again and again he declared that he had not made war against them, but against the authors of their unhappiness. He appealed to their self-interest, asking if there was a farm or dwelling in Egypt that a Mameluke did not covet, or a place of authority that he did not hold. Simultaneously the Directory from Paris hastened to assure the Sultan of Turkey that France had embarked upon no campaign of conquest, that her single ambition was to restore his authority and to re-establish public order.[2] It must be confessed that Bonaparte left nothing undone to win the confidence of the inhabitants of Egypt. He respected Moslem prejudices, he prefaced his proclamations with the confession, "There is but One God, and Mohammed is His Prophet," and he consulted the leaders of Islam upon the conversion of his army to that faith. He was aiming to make of Egypt a French stronghold, and he might have succeeded in that design, but for Nelson's victory in Abukir Bay.

[1] The two Mameluke leaders, Ibrahim Bey and Murad Bey, who had composed their jealousies in face of a common danger, escaped; the first into Palestine and the second into the Fayum. From these retreats they continued the campaign. Murad for many months was a thorn in the side of Desaix, to whom Bonaparte entrusted the task of pursuit. At Sidimin in the Fayum, Desaix inflicted upon Murad a second defeat, and at Samanoud in the province of Girga, a third. But Murad lived to fight on, and to harass Desaix during his advance to Aswan, and subsequent retirement to Cairo.

[2] In Chapter II, *La Question d'Egypte* (Calmann Levy, Paris), de Freycinet cynically observes: "Il est remarquable que nous ayons entendu le même langage à cent ans de distance."

There at anchor on the 1st August, 1798, the British Admiral caught the French fleet, and destroyed it.

Of all the generals, Bonaparte alone maintained his calmness in presence of this great disaster. He published fresh assurances to the Egyptian people, and endeavoured to divert attention from the catastrophe. He was only partially successful. Cairo did not approve of taxes imposed for the maintenance of an army of occupation, or consider the creation of the *Institut français de l'Egypte*, as sufficient compensation for the presence of French troops in the capital. Within two months of the naval action at Abukir, insurrection broke out. Discontent had suddenly come to a head. Money had mysteriously disappeared from circulation, and the Paymaster-General, at his wits' end to find means of paying the troops, persuaded Bonaparte to authorize a tax upon property. Every owner was required forthwith to register his title to possession. Few possessed such documents, and the belief that the decree intended the general confiscation of all property, stirred the country to revolt. There were other reasons to excite hatred of the occupation. The French soldier, despite Bonaparte's discipline, was out of hand, and restless at his prolonged absence from France, he looked enviously upon the riches of Cairo. He knew no law but force, no procedure but the custom of war. The population were by now highly incensed. They had suffered severely enough at the hands of the Mamelukes : the government of the French was even worse. There was no longer any personal liberty : costly and tiresome formalities were needed for the simplest action of life. But the Egyptian might have submitted to all these misfortunes, had not Bonaparte interfered with the sheikhs of El Azhar. By his instruction these holy men paraded the capital, wearing sashes and tricolours. It was a degrading and humiliating spectacle in Moslem eyes, and every Imam from the pulpit called down curses upon the head of the unbeliever, who had thus affronted the Faith. Cairo was now ripe for mischief, and presently the word went round to take up arms. A vast mob surged through the streets, massacring and pillaging as they passed. The French pickets and sentries, too few and too isolated to offer defence, were overwhelmed, and for a brief moment it seemed as if the appeal to force had succeeded.

But then Bonaparte appeared in person, and took charge. It was time : for Arabs and fellahin flocking into the capital, increased the difficulty of dealing with the revolt. After severe fighting the French troops got the upper hand, and pursued the insurgents into the mosque of El Azhar. But passion still burnt brightly, and though Bonaparte offered terms, the defenders refused to capitulate. He did not repeat his offer. Planting batteries on the Mokattam hills, he directed their fire upon El Azhar, and drove the rebels out into the open. The day was lost, and the leaders hoisted the white flag. But Bonaparte refused a parley. "You have begun," he said in reply ; "I will finish." His lesson was stern and swift. Numbers of Egyptians lost their lives in the disturbance, a dozen ringleaders were shot out of hand, the council of notables and sheikhs was dissolved, and a heavy fine levied upon the city. This drastic punishment permitted Bonaparte to announce on the 24th October, 1798, —"la sédition est endormie : maudit soit qui la réveillera."

Meanwhile Great Britain had not been idle. She had pushed the Sultan of Turkey into action, and was contemplating a decisive step herself. A firman published by that sovereign at the close of 1798 denounced the French Republic as the enemy of his empire, and ordered a general mobilization. Two armies were formed—one to operate from Rhodes, the second from Syria. Bonaparte did not hesitate. To prevent their junction, he determined to take the offensive in Syria. It was a decision in keeping with his customary audacity. He marched without delay, trusting to surprise the enemy. Concentrating in the first week of February at Qatiya, an oasis thirty miles east of the present town of Port Said, sixteen thousand French soldiers reached Jaffa four weeks later. It is outside the scope of this chapter to relate the history of Bonaparte's campaign in Palestine and Syria. No more need be said of it than that the fortress of Acre stayed the French advance, and that Bonaparte was back in Cairo by the 10th June. It was high time : for rebellion was again fomenting. In the province of Sharqia, influential notables were inciting the people to rise against the French ; in that of Beheira a fellah posing as the Messiah of Islam was collecting a rabble around him. The indomitable Murad Bey was also in the field.

Worse news was to come. A Turkish army collected at Rhodes had sailed, and was disembarking at Abukir. Fortunately for France, its commander lacked enterprise. Content with making good a landing, he would not leave the shelter of his transports. Never was the vigour of Bonaparte better shown. Leaving Murad and other insurgents to the care of a lieutenant, he went hot-foot to the front, and after careful reconnaissance attacked and routed the enemy. It was his final triumph on Egyptian territory: he was contemplating return to France. He kept the intention a profound secret, covering it by speaking vaguely of a general evacuation, and indicating to the *Institut Français* in Cairo various branches of study desirable to pursue. Naming Kléber as his successor, he slipped away on the 25th August, 1799.

Kléber at once declared his inability to remain in Egypt. He lacked munitions, men, and money,[1] and was in no state to meet a British or Turkish attack. Having thus cleared his conscience, he took advantage of the presence of a British naval squadron cruising off the Syrian coast to conclude with its commander a convention. Under the terms of this convention signed at El Arish on the 23rd December, 1799, the French undertook to evacuate Egypt, the British to transport them to Toulon. But Sir Sydney Smith, the admiral, had counted without the British Government. Indignantly the latter denounced the convention, declaring that Kléber must surrender as a prisoner of war, or accept the consequences of defiance. Kléber chose the latter course, and determined to defend Cairo to the last. At Heliopolis on the 8th March he gave battle to a Turkish army entering Egypt from the east. He could claim only partial victory: for outflanking the French lines, a large body of Turks established themselves in Cairo. Within and without the walls, fighting went on for more than a month. Then the Turks beat a retreat, and Kléber re-entered the capital. He angrily reproached the inhabitants for their sympathy with the enemy, and he punished them with fines. But

[1] The military chest was empty, and the pay of the troops in arrear to the tune of frs. 3,000,000. The French financial agent in Egypt estimated also a further deficiency of frs. 10,000,000. (Chapter XIX, Vol. VIII, *Cambridge Modern History.*)

hardly was order restored, than Kléber fell at the hand of an assassin. His death was a misfortune for France and her army in Egypt : for Menou, who succeeded to the command, was an ordinary soldier, passable as a lieutenant, inadequate as a leader. His taste ran to administration rather than to war, and he plunged into the difficult business of governing a country that distrusted and disliked its temporary master. His first act was to replenish the treasury exhausted by the demands that the French occupation made upon it. To accomplish the design, he was forced to levy fresh taxation, and to raise the rates of the old. It was a rash decision at so critical a moment, and in the general indignation, Menou's reform of abuses passed unnoticed. He would have done better to leave existing procedure alone : for the Egyptian suspected every French act. Menou also was exceedingly unpopular with his own troops. They ridiculed his person, ignored his orders, and despised his easy professions of Islam. The situation of the army daily grew more precarious. It had been stranded now for many months, less through the fault of the Directory than from the weakness of the French fleet. Every endeavour to despatch reinforcements failed. In January, 1801, Admiral Gantheaume, convoying a number of troop transports, actually got within 200 miles of Alexandria : then warned of the approach of Keith and his ships, he hastily beat a retreat. Rear-Admiral Linois was no more fortunate. Yet such was the obstinacy of Menou that he would listen to no overtures from England. Recognizing the futility of negotiation, the latter determined to force the French out of Egypt. Joint-action with Turkey was again arranged, and Sir Ralph Abercromby given command of the expedition. In this wise came about Great Britain's first acquaintance with Egypt. Abercromby had been in the Mediterranean since the summer of 1800, transporting his little force from port to port until December of that year, when he was ordered to Egypt. Two considerations had dictated that instruction. The British government were suspicious of fresh French designs upon India, and alarmed at their own isolation in Europe. England had lost her allies, and her ministers watched with dismay the union of the fleets of France, Spain and Holland under a single flag. It was a menace that

threatened British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, and peace appeared to be the only alternative. But so long as Egypt remained in the hands of their enemy, the government dared not come to terms. Negotiation would turn largely upon the point, and ministers could not permit Bonaparte to use possession of Egypt as an excuse for demanding territorial compensation elsewhere. The campaign was not thought to be very serious. Menou's force was estimated at no more than 9,000 French soldiers[1] and Abercromby's army of 15,000 muskets thought to be more than a match for them. The British expedition assembled off Malta, and sailed for Asia Minor. There the general completed his preparations, and on the 8th March disembarked his troops in the bay of Abukir.[2] Thus for the third time within a few months Abukir became the scene of combat. Friand, military governor of Alexandria, had hurried to the spot, and resolutely opposed the British landing. But Abercromby hung on to the beach, and on the 13th March, 1801, he met Menou at Canopis and drove him back upon Alexandria. Leaving Coote to mask that town, Hutchinson, who had assumed command on the death of Abercromby, with a weakened army[3] half British, half Turkish, marched upon Cairo. It was a bold stroke. The British commander had

[1] Footnote page 56, *The Great War with France* (1799–1810), written by Sir Henry Bunbury in 1854, and reprinted by Peter Davis (London, 1927).

[2] For accounts of the landing of the subsequent campaign, the reader is recommended to consult *Walsh's Egypt* (Cadell and Daires, London, 1803) and *Wilson's Egypt* (Roworth, London, 1802). Walsh, an officer of the 93rd Foot, was aide-de-camp to Major-General Sir Eyre Coote, one of Abercrombie's brigadiers, and Wilson commanded the Hompesch Hussars.

[3] He could hear no news of the contingent ordered from India to join the expedition. Its arrival was delayed by numerous accidents ; but the troops disembarked at Koseir on the 16th June, and two days later four brigades had started on their march to the Nile. Discipline was admirably kept, and the force concentrated in good order at Qena on the 6th July. There news of Béliard's capitulation was learnt, and Baird informed that his troops would be only required to garrison Egypt. The despatch of the contingent cost the British Treasury £3,000,000. (*Mémoirés relatifs à l'expédition anglaise partie du Bengale en* 1800 *pour aller combattre en Egypte l'armée d'orient* : par le Comte de Noé (L'imprimerie royale, Paris, 1826).

no troops to spare for communication duties, no power to enforce his decisions upon the Turk. At Benha his diplomacy was severely tested. There Yusef Pasha, at the head of an army of irregulars, joined Hutchinson's column, and at once fell out with the capoudan, or admiral of the Turkish fleet. The situation was already critical, when accident provided the Englishman with excuse to claim supreme authority. The great Mameluke landowners, throwing in their lot with the British, furnished Hutchinson with supplies. To Turkish requests for the same favour they turned a deaf ear, and Yusef and the capoudan were forced to appeal to the British commander for food and forage.[1] None the less, his position was perplexing. He was uncertain of the temper and strength of the enemy, and doubtful of his capacity to withdraw in event of failure. Embarrassed by his Turkish allies and hampered by convoys of sick and wounded, he could think of no solution to his difficulties. But he concealed these anxieties, and his bold front deceived Béliard, commanding in Cairo. That officer had also his problems. He could expect from Menou, now closely invested in Alexandria, neither relief nor instructions, and starvation threatened him. So he sued for terms. Hutchinson was glad enough to accord them, and the French garrison marched out of Cairo with the honours of war. Two months later Menou accepted the same honourable conditions, and by the close of September, 1801, the last French soldier of the army of Egypt had sailed from Alexandria.[2] It was a brilliant and signal success for British arms.[3]

It was also a disappointing conclusion to the hopes of France. No one of the objectives imposed by the Directory had been fulfilled. Bonaparte certainly had established himself in Egypt: but her inhabitants hotly resented his presence. If he had relieved them from one domination, he had replaced it with a second, no less obnoxious. On the other hand, he had not disturbed England's commercial supremacy in the

[1] See page 51, *Egypt in the Nineteenth Century* (Smith, Elder & Co., 1898), by D. A. Cameron.

[2] Twenty-four thousand officers and men were thus repatriated at the expense of Great Britain.

[3] The British forces withdrew from Egypt in 1803, having delayed their departure in the hope of protecting the Mamelukes from the revengeful Turk.

East, cut the Isthmus of Suez, or hoisted the tricolour in the Red Sea. Judged then by these considerations, the venture terminated in failure. Yet that verdict would be no more than half the truth : for the occupation left a permanent mark upon the country. Bonaparte himself profoundly impressed the Egyptians, and his ideals captured their imagination. French methods of administration still influence the Egyptian government, French habits of thought still dominate educated Egyptian society. It was a prodigious achievement to accomplish within the short space of three years.

Over Egypt the Sultan of Turkey reasserted his sovereignty : but the fortunes of the Ottoman Empire were at a low ebb. No place or favour could be gained except through intrigue and bribery. Corruption in one form or another pervaded the public service from top to bottom, and the ruler was a shadow in the midst of a company of pretenders and traitors. Greece was in perpetual revolt, though the wealth, commerce and diplomacy of the empire lay in Greek hands.[1] A few provincial viceroys affected a sovereign state, receiving embassies and defying the instructions of Constantinople : but the majority, like their master, were puppets of stronger men. The break in hostilities brought no relief to Turkey, her tale of humiliation became longer. The administration was rotten to the core, and the fabric of empire seemed crumbling to pieces. Egypt became yet more wretched under Turkish rule. Life and property were insecure, the rights of succession and inheritance were seized by the government. The cultivator lived as best he could. The reputed possession of wealth was sufficient to condemn the victim without the formality of trial, and the Egyptian's only safeguard was the simulation of poverty. Commerce had been already destroyed and the silk trade ruined, and nothing now flourished but the appetite of the Turkish official for money.

From this misery Mohammed Ali rescued the people. For the following fifty years, the history of Egypt is the history of Mohammed Ali, one of those commanding figures who from time to time pass across the world's

[1] See page 17, *Mohammed Ali of Egypt* (Quaritch, London, 1898), by Sir Charles Murray, H.M. Consul-General in Egypt, 1846–53.

stage. Ambitious and unscrupulous, he became master of Egypt at an early age. Such was his natural genius that he would have established a reputation in any environment: in Egyptian circles he was a formidable and arresting personality. Born at Cavalla in 1769, he was with the unlucky Turkish force destroyed by Napoleon at Abukir in 1799, though that experience did not deter him from taking part in Abercrombie's landing eighteen months later, or from joining Hutchinson's advance upon Cairo. Khusrev, named Pasha of Egypt, marking the capacity of the young man, appointed him to the command of the Albanian militia, that supported the Turkish occupation: but Mohammed Ali, dissatisfied with his treatment, coolly espoused the part of Bardisy, a Mameluke bey, then in open revolt. It was an unnatural alliance, contrary to the interest of either party. Bardisy would have behaved more prudently had he forthwith marched against the Albanians: Mohammed Ali, had he gone over to the side of the Porte. The latter was the first to perceive his error, and to cover it, he attacked Bardisy, and broke up the Mameluke combination. Then taking possession of Cairo in the name of the Sultan, he called upon Egyptians to look on him as their natural protector. He played for a big stake and fortune favoured him. From the tumult and disorder which followed, Egypt suffered profoundly. Albanian, Mameluke and Turk plundered and pillaged, until the victims could stomach no more. On the 14th May, 1805, the sheikhs and notables of the capital implored Mohammed Ali to become the viceroy of Egypt, and the Sultan confirmed their choice.[1]

Two years later, Great Britain again took the field in Egypt. The latter claims the campaign as a triumph for her arms, but Englishmen may fairly doubt that confident assertion. If the fighting round Rosetta reflected high credit upon the defenders, none the less the campaign itself ended in stalemate: Mohammed Ali could not expel the British

[1] On Mohammed Ali undertaking first to continue the customary offerings to the holy places, and secondly to reserve for the Porte the harbour dues of Alexandria, Rosetta and Damietta. Mohammed Ali compounded the first condition by accepting to send 1,000 tons of wheat annually to Jedda, and the second by agreeing to pay an annual tribute of 4,000 "purses" (approximately £200,000).

from Alexandria, General Fraser dared not leave the shelter of its walls. It was a rash expedition, undertaken in the hope of warning the Ottoman empire of the danger of listening to Bonaparte's wiles. A new coalition against France was forming, of which Russia was a leading partner, and Bonaparte designed to attach Turkey to his side. To persuade the latter to reflect before she took an irrevocable step, the British government sent a few warships through the Dardanelles, and General Fraser with a force of 5,000 infantry to Alexandria. Both were dangerous and absurd ventures. The ships had no troops to land, the troops no ships to maintain communication with home. Fraser was instructed to seize and occupy Alexandria : he was not to conquer Egypt. The warning was unneeded : his force was far too insignificant to attempt the feat. Fraser disembarked his troops in Alexandria on the 16th March, 1807, and at once found himself in a difficulty about supplies. There were none to be had in the neighbourhood of the town, and Major Missett, the British Agent and consul-general, advised the general to secure Rosetta. But the place was well defended, and the attack failed. Undismayed by the check, Fraser hurried up fresh troops, expecting some assistance from the Mamelukes. None came, and after severe fighting in which the British came off second best,[1] the latter drew off and retired upon Alexandria. There was no further fighting. Fraser, now reinforced by a fresh contingent from Sicily, was too strong to be dislodged, and quietly waited in his entrenchments, until the autumn when Great Britain and Turkey came to terms and Fraser re-embarked for home. From this triumph, Mohammed Ali never looked back. He had repelled the Englishman, he had ousted the Turk, and there remained but the remnants of the Mamelukes to contest his supremacy in Egypt. Them he resolved to destroy at one blow. But he was in no hurry, and for four years he brooded over, and perfected his plans. Then the moment came, when either he must execute them, or pay the penalty of his own weakness. Ordered by the Sultan to recapture from the Wahhabis the holy cities, he dared not

[1] Sir Henry Bunbury, page 203, *The Great War with France* (Peter Davis, London, 1927), pays a compliment to Mohammed Ali for his treatment of the British prisoners of war.

leave his rivals an open field. His mind was soon made up. Inviting the beys to witness the departure of the troops from the citadel of Cairo, he enticed them into a narrow passage, and there the Mamelukes met their death.[1] It was an act of treachery that stains his reputation. Yet Mohammed Ali had this excuse : peace between him and his victims was impossible. Honour and scruple troubled them no more than him, and if Mohammed Ali slaughtered in cold blood his enemies, let it be remembered in excuse, that they would have consummated his destruction with as little compunction.

Mohammed Ali delegated no authority, invested his agents with no powers. His rule was personal : in his plans the people had no part, in their execution no voice. Their submission to his will he accepted as a right, their disobedience he punished as a duty. In common with all fresh masters of Egypt, he had first to replenish an empty treasury. His Albanians were clamouring for pay, the expeditionary force in Arabia for munitions and supplies. To procure money, he did as Suliman had done, and proclaimed himself sole owner of the soil. He bought the produce at his own price, he sold it in the best market he could find. Even the powerful Moslem corporations, that possessed then nearly one-third of the cultivable land in Egypt, did not escape. They were left owners in name ; but their revenues passed to Mohammed Ali. As his expenditure increased, he devised fresh expedients to raise money. Campaigns in Arabia, in the Sudan and in the Morea drained the available resources of Egypt, and Mohammed Ali thought to find money in controlling all production. He ordered the cultivator to raise certain crops, he purchased their harvest at his own prices. But trading of this type carries its own penalty, and Egypt did not escape a common experience.[2] The

[1] 1st March, 1811.

[2] Cameron, in *Egypt of the Nineteenth Century*, gives an instructive instance. In August, 1816, Mohammed Ali sold in advance a million bushels of wheat, part at 2*s*. 6*d*. the bushel, and the balance at 3*s*. 6*d*. Following news of a bad harvest in Europe, wheat prices rose later to 5*s*. But Mohammed Ali could not take advantage of the opportunity, or meet his engagements. The crops lay in the fields awaiting transport to the State magazines. The prices suddenly fell and speculators found themselves ruined. In turn,

condition of the fellah was deplorable : that of the trader became no better. Not satisfied with control of exports, Mohammed Ali turned his eye upon imports. He had better have left them alone : heavy and arbitrary tariffs so encouraged smuggling, that the customs receipts seriously declined. His endeavour to transform Egypt into a manufacturing country was no more successful. In the pursuit he transgressed every principle of commerce. He bought raw material as extravagantly as he purchased naval and military stores : he drove the artisan into his workshop with no more compunction than he forced the fellah into the army. In such circumstances, it is not surprising that Europe consistently undersold Egyptian production.

But if he governed capriciously, there were times also when he remembered a ruler's duty towards his subjects. He reformed many abuses of administration, and enforced order with a heavy hand.[1] Illiterate himself, he wished to remove that reproach from Egypt. In 1836 he established a council of education. But his endeavour to promote desire for knowledge failed ; schools and teachers waited in vain for pupils. Other rulers would have abandoned the experiment in despair : but Mohammed Ali was made of sterner stuff. Since students would not come, he conscripted them as he conscripted the army. Still the country hung back, until the creation of this council of education was Mohammed Ali's last hope. It was ineffective : and the schools were closed, and educational missions to Europe withdrawn. Egypt could not afford both war and education. In other ways also, he strove to improve the condition of the people. He introduced modern and scientific methods of agriculture, and he encouraged the cultivation of long staple cotton. Finally he was the author of a simple code of law, and a

they could not accept delivery when Mohammed Ali was ready. Cameron adds : " The waste was visible in the mountains of corn that lay rotting in his barns for want of a purchaser, and this too while the fellahin were starving."

[1] Marshal Marmont, who visited Egypt in the second half of Mohammed Ali's reign, spoke thus of public security : " *Aujourd'hui dans un espace de cent ligues, un Européen comme tout autre individual, peut seul, sans danger, librement et sans escorte se rendre du Taurus au Sennaar.*" (See page 126, tome III, *Voyage du Duc de Raguse.*)

champion of justice. To him, the European trader owes the foundation of his present prosperity. Though at heart disliking strangers, he recognized that Egypt required their services, and encouraged their settlement in Alexandria.[1] But his passion for experiment rarely lasted long. Either the treasury could not support its cost, or he feared lest innovation should impair his own authority. Egypt received her ruler's projects and measures without enthusiasm : no Turk or Mameluke had pressed her harder. Under Mohammed Ali, the fellah could no longer claim the muscles of his body as his own. They were at the call of that prince, paid for at the rate of one piastre a day. Upon the cultivator fell intolerable taxation : ten to sixteen piastres upon each acre he farmed, twenty piastres upon every head of cattle, four piastres upon the camels and sheep. There were house and poll taxes as well. Nor was Mohammed Ali above inventing pretexts to escape his debt to the army and the civil service : [2] frequently the troops and officials were forced to accept in part payment of wages, products from the State factories. The unhappy victims had then to sell the goods in the best market that they could discover.

Service in the army and navy increased the suffering of the people. No law regulated the incidence or the duration of the burden : the will of Mohammed Ali arbitrarily determined both. Early in the course of his reign, he perceived the necessity of raising a national army. His Albanian militia was costly to recruit, their loyalty to his person doubtful. He went methodically to work. From France

[1] Mohammed Ali was a tolerant Moslem, drawing no public distinction between Islam and Christianity. When Boghos Bey, an Armenian, died in Alexandria in 1843, Mohammed Ali was furious to learn that the governor of the town had omitted to pay the deceased the usual military compliments. He accordingly wrote thus to the culprit : "To the very fortunate, very venerated, my son Osman Pasha. Thou art an Ass, a Barbarian, and a Turk : you have rendered Boghos no honours."

[2] That offered to the army of Syria was a curious instance. The army before retiring upon Egypt had been instructed to destroy all arms, to prevent the enemy making use of them : but on reaching Cairo, the survivors discovered, to their dismay, that the cost had to be borne by them. It required strong protest from Ibrahim Pasha, the commander, before Mohammed Ali consented to charge the sum to the State.

he imported a number of officers,[1] from Mameluke families he enlisted cadets, and from the Sudan he recruited rank and file. The first experiments were not particularly satisfactory. The young Mameluke ridiculed his Christian instructors, the negroes could not support the climate of Egypt. Faced with failure, Mohammed Ali recast his ideas, and created a purely national army. It was an arduous task to transform the fellah into a willing soldier: for to the Egyptian organized war is a senseless occupation, the pastime of princes, but not of commoner men. Still the viceroy persevered. To ease their burden he conferred certain privileges upon the rank and file. He permitted them to marry,[2] he provided their families with half rations. Nothing was left undone to make the best use of the material at hand. Artillery, cavalry and infantry schools of instruction were established in different centres, fresh French officers engaged as their commandants. Gradually the new army took shape, so that on the outbreak of war in Syria, Mohammed Ali could count upon putting into the field 130,000 regular troops. Simultaneously he was engaged in creating a new navy to take the place of that destroyed at Navarino. He began by constructing dockyards and arsenals at Alexandria, he ended by having the command of eleven ships of the line, seven frigates, and a host of smaller vessels. It was a notable achievement, but Egypt paid a heavy bill for the accomplishment. Her population at that period numbered less than three million souls, and from it Mohammed Ali took for his military and naval purposes three hundred thousand men in the prime of life.

His conduct of four overseas campaigns demonstrated his talent for military organization. Arabia was his first venture. His objective in that peninsula was the destruction

[1] One, Joseph Séve, adopted Islam, and founded a family, whose members later married into the dynasty of his master. He began life as a cadet in the French navy: he ended his career in France on the staff of Grouchy in the Waterloo campaign. Thrown out of employment by peace, he sailed for Egypt and entered the service of Mohammed Ali. He was a soldier of first-rate ability, and his leadership of Ibrahim's army in its retreat across Sinai was a masterly achievement. (*Soliman Pasha or Colonel Séve*, by Vingtrimier: Firwin Didot et Cie, Paris, 1886.)

[2] Page 229, *Aperçu sur l'Egypte* (Fortin, Masson et Cie, Paris, 1840), by Clot Bey.

of the Wahhabi power, whose ruling prince supported the Arab claim to the caliphate. It was a long and bitter struggle, beginning in 1811, and closing in 1818, wherein fortune favoured first the Wahhabi, then the Egyptian. Saoud routed the latter at Medina ; Ibrahim, eldest son of Mohammed Ali, took his revenge at Deraya. Hardly had the victor returned to Egypt, than Mohammed Ali planned the conquest of the Sudan, and Ismail, a second son, in 1820 led an expedition into Sennaar. The third campaign was fought on Greek soil.[1] Ibrahim was again in command. Sixty Egyptian ships of war carrying 17,000 troops sailed from Alexandria on the 24th July, 1824, and made for the island of Rhodes. Six months later, the force disembarked at Navarino, and crossing the gulf of Corinth, joined the Turkish troops besieging Missolonghi. So far Ibrahim, obeying the customary conventions of war, had spared the civilian population : but the resistance of the Greek hillmen exhausted his indulgence, and he authorized a campaign of reprisal. It was carried out mercilessly. Innocent women and children were seized and shipped to Alexandria to be sold there as slaves. The barbarity shocked Europe, and the Powers intervened. An allied squadron sailed for Navarino and in the bay gave battle to the Egyptian fleet [2] on the 20th October, 1827. Hardly a ship escaped, and a year later Ibrahim evacuated the Peloponnesus.

The fourth and last campaign waged by the viceroy of Egypt was fought in Asia. Disaster in Greece had shown the weakness of the Porte, and Mohammed Ali meditated defiance of his suzerain. The opportunity came in 1831, when, exasperated by the refusal of the governor of Acre to compel the return of Egyptian fellahin, who had sought refuge in Syria to avoid conscription, he ordered the capture of the fortress. It was taken by storm, and the Sultan at once deposed Mohammed Ali from the pashalik of Egypt.[3]

[1] Turkey finding herself unable to suppress revolution, called upon Egypt to perform the task, and Mohammed Ali obediently replied to the summons. Already governor of Crete, he became by the firman of the 16th January, 1824, governor of the Morea.

[2] One battleship of 84 guns, two of 74 guns, five of 60 guns, 15 of 48 guns, and 37 smaller craft. (Chapter XIII, *Egypt in the Nineteenth Century*, by D. A. Cameron.)

[3] Firman, 2nd May, 1832.

The intrepid Ibrahim, again in command, cared as little as his father about firmans of this type, and with 9,000 Egyptians and 9,000 Druses, he set out for Damascus. The battle of Homs followed on the 8th July, and the Turkish commander retired in disorder. Ibrahim pressed the pursuit, caught the enemy near Alexandretta, and occupied Adana. Then reinforced by a fresh army of 50,000 fellahin, he continued the advance. At Ak-Shehr, on the 21st December, he gained his third successive victory. It was complete. The Turks fled in confusion, and the Egyptian forces encamped at Kutaya, almost within sight of the Bosphorus. It was an extraordinary triumph, even if liberal allowance is made for Turkish inefficiency: but unhappily, the Powers of Europe took alarm. The Sultan had made an unnatural alliance with Russia, and England in particular did not desire to see the Czar established in Constantinople. Diplomatic pressure was brought to bear upon Mohammed Ali, and reluctantly he ordered a retirement upon Syria. The Egyptian occupation of that country aroused bitter resentment. Syria has never been an easy country to govern, and the inhabitants resented Mohammed Ali's harsh and tyrannical administration. The climax came when Ibrahim was ordered to disarm the population. It was a measure that the haughty Syrian would not stomach. He became a rebel, and though organized resistance was eventually crushed, guerilla warfare continued throughout the occupation. Tempted by news of the rising, the Porte again tried conclusions with Ibrahim. The short campaign ended disastrously for the Turks, and the battle of Nezib, fought on the 24th June, 1839, vindicated the superiority of Egyptian arms. It was Mohammed Ali's last success. The Powers were now determined to preserve the Ottoman Empire intact, and Mohammed Ali, relying upon support from France, foolishly defied them. England took up the challenge.[1] An

[1] While British ministers were urging the Pasha to clip the wings of his rebellious vassal, Manchester and Liverpool were striking medals in honour of Mohammed Ali, inscribed thus: "To the friend of science, commerce and order, who protected the subjects and property of adverse Powers, and kept open the overland route to India; 1840." A pretty and not ill-deserved compliment. In turn France struck a third to "Mehemet Ali Régénérateur de l'Egypt. Il sait défendre avec noblesse l'honneur de son pays."

Anglo-Turkish force was landed at Beirut, an Anglo-Austrian squadron bombarded Acre. Ibrahim, hurrying to the relief of that fortress, suffered defeat, and ordered a general retirement to Egypt. The Treaty of London [1] of July, 1840, and the Turkish firman of February, 1841,[2] closed ingloriously Mohammed Ali's ambitious dream of empire in Asia.

If then Egypt speaks to-day of her independence under Mohammed Ali, it is an illusion that others cannot share. She remained a vassal of Turkey. Yet Mohammed Ali undoubtedly accomplished great things. He began in Egypt as a humble subaltern, he died her ruler. His tenacity of purpose was remarkable, his shrewdness of mind no less so. If by war he exhausted Egypt, to his credit it must be said that he left no burden of debt. He died in November, 1848, an enfeebled and disillusioned old man. Misfortune clouded his closing years. The Nile overflowed its banks, and inundation ruined the Delta: plague decimated the cattle, and locusts devoured the crops. There was famine in the land. But Mohammed Ali set himself to combat these visitations of Providence. He began the construction of a barrage across the Nile to the north of Cairo, he traced fresh canals in the Delta: he imported cattle from abroad, he purchased large quantities of artificial manure. But measures of this type can only partially repair ravages inflicted by war and nature, and the national prosperity came abruptly to a stop. Mohammed Ali had outlived his usefulness to Egypt.

[1] France was not a signatory. She had supported Mohammed Ali against the Porte, and the four Powers, England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, parties to the Treaty, did not invite the French government to take part in the discussion. Paris hotly resented the exclusion, and that astute critic of policy, Leopold I of Belgium, wrote to Queen Victoria, warning England to beware of feeling on the subject. See letter 26th July, Chapter IX, Vol. I, *Letters of Queen Victoria* (John Murray, London, 1908).

[2] Firman dated 13th February, 1841, addresed to "My Vizier Mohammed Ali Pasha, governor of Egypt and of the provinces of Nubia, Darfur, Kordofan, and Sennaar." This firman stipulated *inter alia* that Egypt was to recognize the treaties concluded by Turkey with the Powers as binding also upon her, to impose taxation in the name of the Sultan, to pay one quarter of her revenue into the Imperial treasury, to maintain an army no larger than 18,000 rank and file, and to reserve to the Sultan the appointment of senior military officers.

CHAPTER IV

ISMAIL AND ANGLO-FRENCH CONTROL

Abbas, a grandson, succeeded. Of his regency there is little good to say. Capricious and reactionary, he shed no fresh lustre upon the family. He despised European procedure and progress, he dreaded Christian influence upon Egypt. "My grandfather," he was accustomed to say, "thought himself an autocrat. He was one to his subjects and to his children: but to the consuls of Europe he was no more than a shoe. If I too must submit to some one, let me be then the servant of the caliph, and not of the Christian, whom I hate." Yet despite these brave words, he was ready enough to make use privily of Christians, and by following their advice, to amass a considerable fortune. But in the business of the State, he neither invited the assistance of Europeans, nor pursued the ideals of his grandfather. He closed the few remaining factories and schools as unnecessary and impious institutions: he shut the public hospital of Cairo, and dismissed its director Clot Bey, the faithful servant and biographer of Mohammed Ali. Yet despite these meannesses, he spent the revenues of Egypt extravagantly, and unprofitably. His reign was short, and in 1854, Mohammed Said, youngest son of Mohammed Ali, succeeded. The new viceroy posed as a constitutional ruler, deferring publicly to the counsel of his advisers, when their opinion did not conflict with his own. He was a well-meaning man, who introduced many reforms: abolishing the commercial monopoly instituted by his grandfather, dismissing the Albanian bodyguard imported by Abbas, suppressing payment of taxes in kind, and maintaining a short service army. He forbade the slave trade, and the use of the kourbash by administrative officials, and he punished members of

the civil service convicted of malpractices. To his credit let it also be remembered he renounced claim to the ownership of the soil ; by a decree published in 1858, the freehold passed to the cultivator, marking the first surrender of the privileges of the throne.[1] His conduct in other directions was less prudent. He was a magnificent patron, and de Lesseps, bent upon the construction of the Suez Canal, took advantage of Said's generous nature. It would have been enough to provide that ambitious Frenchman with a simple concession : but the viceroy gave far more, mortgaging the resources and labour of his subjects upon the adventure. He early acquired a taste for spending, which the revenues of Egypt could not satisfy, and to meet the deficiency, he had recourse to the money-lenders of Europe. He borrowed extravagantly on the security of Egypt, in 1858, in 1861 and in the following year. Then death intervened, and the succession passed to Ismail.[2]

About his memory so many fables revolve, that the historian cannot always separate the truth from the false. What is certain is this : in a few years he brought Egypt to insolvency. His career is the story of a megalomaniac, his end the fate of all spendthrifts. Of his early years there is little to record. He was educated at St Cyr, and returning to Egypt devoted himself to agriculture. He began his reign well enough by avowing an intention to distinguish between his own expenditure and that of the State, and to live within the limits of his own civil list. But that prudent promise was broken almost before the words had left his lips. He entered lightheartedly into every enterprise, he befriended every needy adventurer, who paid him court. The Moslem

[1] The decree established the right of succession to agricultural property, of ownership by the cultivator after five years' payment of tax, of power to mortgage, and lastly the right of the State to expropriate on grounds of public utility.

[2] Son of Ibrahim, eldest child of Mohammed Ali. Doubt has been cast upon Ibrahim's descent, and rumour has questioned Ismail's right to succeed. Gossip even during the lifetime of Ibrahim was busy with the story : but it is difficult to credit the allegation. Mohammed Ali had no reason to adopt a child. He married very early in life, and had a numerous family. Clot Bey, a contemporary historian, dismissed the report as entirely inaccurate. See also page vi, Introduction, *Mohammed Ali of Egypt*, by Sir Charles Murray.

law conferring succession upon the eldest male of the line did not content his ambitious mind: he wished to found a family, as well as perpetuate a dynasty. Thus in 1866 he persuaded the Porte to alter the firman of succession in accordance with that desire, and Egypt paid heavily for the privilege. Her tribute to Constantinople was raised to £600,000. Still Ismail was not content. On the same terms the Porte was willing enough to confer other distinctions, and from Viceroy, Ismail became Khedive.[1] Once again Egypt submissively paid the bill.

In the first years of his rule, Egypt could well afford the fancies of the Khedive: for the country had entered a period of extraordinary prosperity. The war of secession in America discovered new markets for Egyptian cotton, and the spinners of Europe were clamouring for the supply of raw material. Ismail reaped a harvest from the boom: but he wasted the wealth of Egypt in countless extravagances. No whim was so fanciful that he did not indulge it. He built noble residences for the members of his family, and he assigned to dependents sufficient incomes to maintain a royal household. He flung himself into the most imprudent enterprises, emerging from few either with profit to himself, or with benefit to his subjects. Following Said's example, he began almost at once to borrow at heavy discounts and at ruinous rates of interest.[2] The interest charged was fan-

[1] From the Persian, signifying a prince. The distinction hardly satisfied Ismail: he was already Grand Vizier, but desired to be known as Aziz, or the Gracious. The Sultan, though greedy enough for bribes, rejected the request. He himself was Abd El Aziz, or Slave of the Gracious, and he could not accept to become the nominal inferior of a vassal.

[2] The borrowing was extravagantly conducted, as the 1873 loan made by the Oppenheim firm clearly shows. Nominally for £32,000,000 at 7 per cent., it was issued at a discount of 33 per cent. As a matter of fact, the Khedive only received £11,000,000 in cash and £9,000,000 in depreciated scrip. The net total certainly did not exceed £18,000,000, and for that meagre sum Egypt paid £2,560,000 interest annually. (M. G. Mulhall, October issue, 1882, *Contemporary Review*, London.) Lord Cromer, in *Egypt No. 1, 1903*, cites a second instructive instance, remarking that "it was by no means an extreme or unusual case." The State borrowed £72,000 from a local bank, and in repayment handed over £230,000 worth of Unified Stock at a price of £31 5*s*. 8*d*. It was a short cut to beggary. Still it is fair to say that part of the borrowed money

tastic: never less than seven per cent., it gradually advanced to double that rate. At Ismail's accession in 1863, the public debt of Egypt stood at £3,000,000: in 1876, it was no less than £89,000,000. For part of this sum it must fairly be said that he was not responsible, and for part, he had something to show in return. But extravagant living also was at fault, and his credit became so shaken that the money market hesitated to make fresh loans. In despair Ismail mortgaged the future. In August, 1871, he promulgated the decree of the Mukabala. It was a confession of bankruptcy. Under that law, a proprietor who paid into the Treasury a lump sum equal to six years of the land tax, would relieve his property permanently of half the land tax. It produced no more than £5,000,000: for the cautious Egyptian suspected a trap. Nor was a second experiment of similar type more successful, or more creditable to the finance of the Khedive. It was the beginning of the end. In 1875 the Khedive sold to Great Britain his Suez Canal shares.

It had taken many years before British statesmen recognized how closely national interests were linked with the near east. Pitt had suspected the fact, Canning and Palmerston had pursued Pitt's conclusion. But public opinion remained doubtful, until the completion of the Suez Canal brought home the knowledge that control of the road to India had passed out of the hands of Great Britain. It was a disturbing reflection. Hitherto supremacy at sea had made the passage round the Cape safe and convenient for British shipping. That strategical advantage was lost, when it became certain that all shipping would in future pass through the Suez Canal. Unhappily the British Government had no share in the management of the company. Its offices were in Paris, its directors were French. France held half the shares, Egypt the remainder, and Great Britain, owning three-fourths of the trade with the east, lay at the mercy of the two Powers. It was an anomalous situation, the more painful, since de Lesseps had originally pressed England to be partner in the enterprise. His invitation evoked no

went on capital expenditure. Mr. Mulhall estimates that the Suez Canal accounted for £16,700,000, irrigation development £12,600,000, and railway development £13,000,000.

answer : the Government looked coldly upon the project, and the public took its cue from Ministers.[1] It cannot be said that either the country or the Cabinet showed imagination or insight : even Palmerston, usually alert, hesitated, suspecting a French design upon Egypt. Happily, Disraeli did not share these doubts. No sooner was the canal opened for traffic, than he sounded the French government on the point of concession to British interests. The overture was coldly received. France in 1871 was in no mood to surrender any right that she had acquired, and de Lesseps was disinclined to admit England into a partnership she had once refused. Disraeli, unperturbed by the rebuff, bided his time. The opportunity came four years later, when Ismail was at the end of his resources. He had then only one asset unsold or unmortgaged, Egypt's shares in the Suez Canal.[2]

He turned to France, and offered his holding to a Paris syndicate : 177,000 shares for a lump sum of £3,680,000. The buyers, doubtful of the value of the security, asked for time : but time was precisely the commodity that Ismail could not give. It was then the autumn, and on the 1st December, Egypt had to find £3,000,000 to meet the charges of the public debt. Meanwhile news of the negotiations had escaped, and Disraeli showed his hand. The Khedive was delighted to hear of a fresh bidder : but unable to wait, he offered the syndicate an option on the shares on onerous terms to Egypt. It was, in fact, a sale disguised as a loan : for Ismail, whatever his intention, could not have redeemed the security. De Lesseps was quick enough to realize that point, and hurrying to Paris he besought the French government to step in and find the money. But France was on friendly relations at that time with England, and unwilling to cross Disraeli. She refused to interfere, and Her Majesty's

[1] In replying to a question put in the House of Commons the 7th July, 1857, by Mr. Berkeley, member for Bristol, Lord Palmerston described the Suez Canal project as a bubble, and asserted its construction to be physically impossible. He added that a canal would be inimical to British interests, opposed to Great Britain's traditional policy, and planned as a menace to British supremacy in India. If the public invested money in the enterprise, they did so at their own peril.

[2] There was a charge even upon this security : the coupons had been sold up to 1894.

government made a firm offer for the shares. Unfortunately Parliament was in recess, and the prime minister could not obtain its sanction to the expenditure. His fertile mind rose to the occasion. He boldly borrowed the sum required [1] from the Rothschilds, and on the 24th November, 1875, England became the largest individual shareholder in the Suez Canal Company.[2] It was a happy stroke of policy, typical no doubt of the good fortune that has attended the development of the British Empire, but characteristic also of the capacity of her statesmen to repair mistakes of their predecessors.

Unconscious of approaching catastrophe, Ismail went on his accustomed way. Since his accession, scarcely a year passed that he did not procure some extension of his authority in Egypt. One firman succeeded another, each more liberal in terms than the last, until at the end the Sultan had given away all but the bare title of suzerainty. Mohammed Ali, a greater viceroy than Ismail, was less fortunate. The firman of 1841 had severely restricted his political and commercial rights. He could strike no coinage, he could promulgate no laws. His army formed part of the imperial forces, his ships of war part of the imperial navy. Ismail was determined to escape from this humiliating situation. The grandfather had thought to gain the same end through war: the grandson made use of another and less reputable procedure. He bribed heavily. In 1867 he was permitted to negotiate directly with the Powers on the subject of the capitulations, in 1872 to contract loans without the consent of Constantinople, and in 1876 to enter freely into customs and commercial treaties. Egypt paid high enough for these and other concessions.[3] But they served Ismail's purpose,

[1] £4,000,000 paid in three instalments.

[2] See letter addressed by Disraeli to Queen Victoria, dated 24th November, 1875: "It is just settled. You have it, Madam: the French government has been outgeneralled. They tried too much, offering loans at an usurious rate with conditions which would have virtually given them the government of Egypt. The Khedive in despair and disgust offered Your Majesty's government to purchase his shares outright: he would never listen to such a proposition before."

[3] Cameron, in Chapter XXIII, *Egypt and the Nineteenth Century*, gives two instructive examples. A gift of 30,000 rifles and a service of plate purchased the firman of 1872, a bribe of £900,000 to the Sultan, that of 1876.

and ministered to his ambition: so that in the last years of his reign the Khedive became a second grand vizier of the empire, who advised his sovereign upon the subject of Egypt. Unhappily for himself and for his subjects, he used his privileges with little discretion. In his plight, he endeavoured to persuade the British government that Egypt was only temporarily embarrassed, that one more and last loan would set the Treasury permanently on its feet. The cabinet was not impressed with this assurance, nor particularly anxious to test its truth: but as the purchasers of Egypt's holding in the Suez Canal Company, the ministers could not well refuse inquiry into her financial condition. It was in the circumstances an astonishing proposal. Either the Khedive was genuinely ignorant of the facts, or he was singularly simple in supposing that the British cabinet would accept without verification his figures and statements. But he insisted so strongly, that Mr. Cave, a banker, went out to Cairo in the winter of 1875–76 to investigate the situation. His report made unpleasant reading for all parties. He warned the world that Egypt was approaching insolvency. His views fell like a bombshell upon Europe, and Ismail threw up the sponge. He suspended payment of interest upon the floating debt, and speculators dreaded lest he should apply the same procedure to the guaranteed obligations.

The publication of the Cave report put an end to borrowing, and brought the day of reckoning nearer. In vain the Khedive endeavoured to postpone that disaster by making profuse promises of reform, in vain he consented to European control of the public debt: creditors clamouring for their pound of flesh, pressed their respective governments all the harder to protect their interests. Great Britain alone held aloof. She refused to take part in the new Commission of Public Debt,[1] and she disclaimed responsibility for the financial embarrassment of the country. Nothing indeed is clearer in the history of this perplexing period than the persistent endeavour of Her Majesty's government to avoid entanglement in Egypt. The fact that London held large blocks of Egyptian securities did not affect that

[1] 2nd May, 1876. England did not join the Commission until the following year.

decision : [1] in the judgment of British ministers, it was for creditors to make their own arrangements with the Khedive. That was the policy of the Conservative government, and Mr. Gladstone, who took office in April, 1880, held also to it.[2]

At heart Ismail was unrepentant : he had only yielded to European administration of the public debt in the hope of stopping further inquiries. But Cave had hardly written his report, before a second commission of inquiry was in Cairo. It was conducted by Goschen and Joubert, representing the joint interests of British and French investors. Despite the disappearance of Ismail Sadik, the chief actor,[3] the investigation laid bare the whole story of extravagance. Goschen and Joubert recommended many reforms : among others the appointment of two Europeans to control receipts and disbursements. But the confusion that pervaded the administration made it clear that more drastic procedure was necessary. It was evident in 1877 that the revenue would not cover the charges of the public debt, the normal expenditure of government, and the private needs of the ruler. Mercilessly the Khedive imposed heavier taxes upon

[1] England held, in 1878, £42,000,000 ; France, £31,000,000 ; Egypt, £6,900,000,—out of a total debt of £98,000,000.

[2] To Sir Edward Malet, appointed H.M. Agent and Consul-General to Egypt in November, 1879, Lord Salisbury said : "Remember that you will never have anything to back you but moral force." Lord Granville, Foreign Secretary a year later, as rigidly enjoined Her Majesty's representative in Cairo to do nothing that might bring about armed intervention. (Chapter III, *Egypt 1879 to 1883* (John Murray, London, 1909), by Sir E. Malet.)

[3] Mr. Goschen on his return spoke in London of Ismail Sadik, the Khedive's minister of finance, the muffetish, or inspector, as being "the main author or instrument of Egypt's great financial maladministration : of having sold the wheat and cotton paid in kind for State taxes before delivery and of having re-sold the same products a second time, so as to receive the price twice over : with having carried on, on his own account, an operation in Egyptian state Stocks, shortly after their rise upon the purchase of the Suez Canal shares by the British Government : of falsifying the prices credited to the State, and of putting the differences into his own pockets : and of having issued bonds to the extent of £5,000,000, which he had no right to issue, and on which he borrowed large sums of money." (*The Story of the Khediviate* (Rivingtons, London, 1902), by Edward Dicey, pages 157–9.)

the country, until the people, exhausted, could pay no more.[1] Still the deficit grew, and at his wits' end, Ismail accepted yet a third commission of inquiry. It would have been well for Egypt had its members got to work at once : unhappily diplomatic negotiation and dispute wasted four valuable months. The choice of a chairman presented a further difficulty. Ismail proposed first General Gordon, secondly de Lesseps, to occupy the position : then finding that the commission demurred to both, he invited Rivers Wilson to undertake the appointment. Once the commission settled to the business, they respected neither form nor person. Three principles guided their deliberations : that debtors as well as creditors must make substantial sacrifice, that procedure must follow the ordinary practice of Egyptian law in bankruptcy suits, and finally that all parties must accept the conclusions of the commission. Asserting that the Khedive was the principal instrument of Egypt's misfortunes, the commission called upon His Highness to surrender the responsibility of government to the ministers,[2] and to confine his personal expenditure to the limits of the Civil List.

Reluctantly Ismail consented to the conditions, and in November, 1878, he called upon Nubar Pasha to form a cabinet. To satisfy Europe that he intended henceforth to govern constitutionally, he offered the ministry of finance to Rivers Wilson, and that of public works to de Blignières, a Frenchman. That action and renewed promises of amendment encouraged the firm of Rothschilds to issue a fresh loan upon the security of the Khedivial Estates.[3] But

[1] *Le Khédive Ismail et l'Egypte* (page 157), by Gaston Zananiri. (Molco, Alexandria, 1923.)

[2] In 1826, Mohammed Ali had created a council of ministers.

[3] Of £8,500,000, the nominal amount of the loan, Egypt received £6,300,000 only. Lord Cromer, in *Modern Egypt*, sternly condemns Ismail. The Khedive believed himself to be the State ; he made no distinction between his own revenues and that of Egypt. The commission of inquiry, for example, elicited that Ismail was the owner of no less than 916,000 acres of land, or say one-fifth of the total cultivable area of the country. The commission held that this vast estate had been either confiscated or purchased out of public money : but the truth of that belief is doubtful. No doubt in some instances owners were forced to sell, at absurdly low figures, their property to the Khedive ; but on the other hand there is reason to believe that over-taxation had driven tenant farmers to

hardly had the money been paid, than an unexpected misfortune confronted the cabinet. Intent upon economy, the prime minister decided to reduce the corps of military officers. The victims not unnaturally resented the step, and mobbed Nubar and Rivers Wilson on their way to a cabinet meeting. Ismail seized the pretext to declare that neither he nor his subjects had confidence in this international ministry, and demanded either that he should preside over the council, or alternatively that he should choose an Egyptian prime minister, upon whose fidelity and judgment the country could rely. Nubar accepted the implication, and retired into private life. Rivers Wilson and de Blignières quickly followed him.[1] But neither Great Britain nor France were prepared to suffer these new pretensions, and they gave a short answer to the Khedive's ultimatum.

Yet it seemed for one moment as if the Khedive would triumph. He had counted upon splitting the two Powers, a daring conception that nearly succeeded. France had long protested against England's modest policy of offering advice : with greater foresight, she perceived that sterner procedure was necessary to arrest bankruptcy. No doubt the government of the Republic were more susceptible to the cries of the creditors of Egypt, than that of the Queen, and from that reason the French government had named de Blignières for the post of minister of public works, while the Khedive was responsible alone for the appointment of Wilson.[2] In the divergence there was thus room for misunderstanding, and it is possible that the partnership between Great Britain and France would have been broken, had not other Powers taken a hand in the conflict between Ismail and the foreign control. Germany in particular had reason to complain of

relinquish their holdings, and migrate to other districts. It was this type of land, unoccupied, that formed the greater part of the Domains Estate.

[1] On the 7th April, when Sherif Pasha formed a national ministry.

[2] It must be said that Disraeli never at heart approved of common action with France in Egypt. He distrusted it as unnatural and dangerous. Writing to Queen Victoria, on learning of the dismissal of Wilson and de Blignières, he said : "We have not only never acknowledged Wilson as an Agent of Your Majesty's government, but we have always studiously and repeatedly disclaimed his being so." (Page 442, Vol. VI, *Life of Disraeli*, by Buckle.)

the attitude of Egypt towards her creditors, and rather than provide Bismarck with legitimate occasion to meddle, Great Britain joined France, and called upon the Porte to depose Ismail.[1]

He had been a notable, if not a very virtuous prince. He committed many follies, he indulged in countless extravagances : but he remained to the end a figure, that held the interest and attention of Europe. Posterity will acknowledge his accomplishment of two great achievements : he established the Mixed Tribunals, a great judicial reform, and he suppressed the practice of slavery. In other matters, he performed less than his professions indicated. He posed as a patron of learning and science, but he did little to encourage the pursuit of either : he spoke of himself as the fellah of the fellahin, but he did little to relieve the burden of agricultural taxation.[2] His imagination was greater than his capacity to execute : he began, but he could not finish. Few of his projects reached fruition. He founded a Geographical Society and he instituted a Museum of Antiquities : but his interest in both soon faded, and later generations have reaped the benefit of these happy inspirations. Inconstancy was Ismail's most formidable enemy.

Tewfik succeeded. He was a complete contrast to his father, frugal in private life, rigid in the performance of public duty. Unhappily, he lacked the qualities that enable a sovereign to weather political storm, and either his resolution, or his judgment, failed at critical moments. The outlook in Egypt, no doubt, was gloomy enough for the new

[1] Ismail sailed from Egypt on the 30th June, 1879. He was still a rich man : but his private claims remained unsatisfied until January, 1888, when the ex-Khedive and his family were offered £1,210,000 in Domains stock, and a sum of £280,000 in cash in final settlement. Of this considerable fortune, Ismail took as his own share £560,000, and the balance was divided among other members of the family.

[2] Lady Duff Gordon, writing in 1867, reproduces on page 108, *Last Letters from Egypt*, her impressions of the misery caused by other heavy incidences of taxation : "every day some fresh tax. Every beast, camel, cow, sheep, donkey and horse is made to pay. The fellahin can no longer eat bread : they are living on barley meal mixed with water, and raw green stuff, vetches, etc. The taxation makes life impossible : a tax on every crop and on every man, on charcoal, on butter, on salt."

Khedive, who honestly desired to serve his country, and Tewfik sat uncomfortably between two jealous parties. On his right were the menacing figures of Evelyn Baring and de Blignières, representatives of the joint control [1] ; on his left, a council of ministers jealous of British and French interference. For a time, Baring and de Blignières had matters their own way. They regarded themselves, not without reason, as receivers in bankruptcy, granting or withholding approval to every measure discussed by the council of ministers. The control took as programme, the findings of the commission of inquiry held in 1878. It was an investigation that had ranged over a wide variety of subjects : recommending radical reform in the administration of justice, in the collection and incidence of taxation,[2] and in the procedure governing the corvée, or unpaid labour. The labours of the control slowly bore fruit. It succeeded in reducing the rate of interest upon the Public Debt, in framing a budget which represented with some accuracy revenue and expenditure, in repealing the mukabula, and in abolishing a number of petty and vexatious taxes. These reforms eventually led to the law of liquidation of July, 1880,[3] whereby Egypt, compounding with her creditors, reserved for her own administrative expenses a share of the national revenue. But meanwhile Egypt was becoming restless. Riaz, now prime minister, had little sympathy with democratic forms of government. He believed in the right of men of his class to rule, and in the duty of the fellahin to obey. He was no worse patriot perhaps for that belief : but he counted without the army, and he ignored its legitimate grievances. At the instance of the joint control, a campaign of economy was undertaken, and again the army became the first victim.

[1] Re-established in September.

[2] Reform of the Land Tax figured prominently among the recommendations. Its incidence gave rise to great abuse. The cultivator paid either *karadjih* or *ushuri*. The first was levied upon land which in theory belonged to the sovereign, the second upon land presumed to have been reclaimed from the desert. The "karadjih" method accounted for 3,500,000 acres at an average rate of 116 piastres per acre; the "ushuri" for 1,300,000 at the average rate of 30 piastres per acre. It is perhaps needless to add that the commission found the greater part of the ushuri land was held by the great landowners.

[3] Modified later by the Convention of London, 18th March, 1885.

Officers of fellahin origin complained that while they were placed upon half-pay, their superiors, of Circassian descent, escaped the misfortune. The rank and file also murmured. Their pay was frequently in arrear, and their labour employed on the Khedivial estates. Dissatisfaction grew, until on the 20th May, 1880, the officers invited the Khedive to consider their situation. The petition contained no threat, no ultimatum. It was a document that was no more than what it professed to be, the recital of a sectional grievance, and the prime minister, impressed with its moderation, ordered an inquiry. At this point, Arabi stepped into the history of Egypt.

He did not originate mutiny : but he resented as fiercely as his brother officers, Circassian influence in the army. Their grievance was legitimate enough. No purely Egyptian officer on his merits could expect then to command a unit, or be appointed to the staff. Arabi declaimed against this injustice. He had risen from humble beginnings. The son of a small cultivator, he was conscripted at the immature age of fourteen : but was a captain at the age of twenty and a lieut.-colonel a year later in command of the palace guards. But Ismail disliked the presence of officers of fellahin origin at his court, and dismissed Arabi to regimental duty. It was not to his taste. He was an incapable officer : in camp a poor disciplinarian, in the field an unenterprising commander. He served without credit in the campaign of Abyssinia in 1876, and at its conclusion was placed on half-pay. He spent the period of retirement in a theological school, and became known for his power of expression. He began to dabble in army politics, and succeeded in interesting Egyptians of various shades of opinion and belief in his views. Brought back to the active list, he found in Abdel Aal, Ali Fehmi and other officers a sympathetic audience, and taking his courage in hand, he marched one day into the room of the prime minister, and demanded the dismissal of Osman Pasha Rifki, the Circassian minister of war. But in Osman, Arabi met his match. While Riaz was hesitating, the war minister convened a court-martial to try Arabi for indiscipline. It was a bold counterstroke, that might have succeeded, but for the presence of a traitor in the council of ministers. Duly warned of the fate that was

awaiting him, Arabi called upon the troops to interpose. A rabble of officers and men swarmed into the court, and carried off the prisoner in triumph to the palace. There the Khedive surrendered to Arabi's demands, and Rifki Pasha was dismissed. Mohammed Ali would have shot a dozen officers sooner than submit to such insolent dictation.

No army is likely to retain unimpaired its spirit, when senior officers encourage the intervention of their juniors in matters of discipline, and Egyptian units did not support the strain. Discipline under Mahmud Pasha Sami, the successor of Osman, went from bad to worse. Throughout the summer of 1881, Sami, Arabi and their supporters plotted against the sovereign. Matters came to a head, when an Egyptian soldier was run over and killed in the streets of Alexandria. It was a pure accident, but the comrades of the dead man carrying the body with them, went to the palace and clamoured for punishment of the perpetrators of the crime. The Khedive took a serious view of this episode, and ordered the trial of the ringleaders. They were condemned to long periods of imprisonment, and the army indignantly contrasted the severity of the sentence with the leniency shown towards nineteen Circassian officers, who had improperly charged Abdel Aal Bey, a fellah officer, with neglect of his military duties. Arabi and his friends at once protested, but the Khedive refused to alter the finding of the court-martial on the soldiers, or punish the Circassian officers. Nor did he stop there. He dismissed Sami from his post as minister of war, and decided to remove from Cairo all military units known to favour Arabi. It was too late. Arabi, disdaining to acknowledge the instructions, set himself at the head of the troops on the 9th September, 1881, marched to the palace, and required first the dismissal of Riaz and his colleagues, secondly the convocation of the assembly of notables, and thirdly an increase of the army to 18,000 men. Once more Tewfik yielded to clamour. He invited Sherif Pasha to form a new ministry, and he summoned the notables to meet in Cairo. The attitude of the assembly was discouraging: its members insisted upon voting the budget. They had no such right. Their functions were consultative, not executive, and Sherif Pasha refused the demand point-blank. Thereupon the chamber broke up in confusion, and

called upon the Khedive to appoint a more complaisant prime minister.

The assembly of notables requires a few words of explanation. At the best it was a pale shadow of a legislative body, at the worst a collection of illiterate landowners and village sheikhs. Created in 1866 by Ismail, the assembly had seldom met, and Egypt had almost forgotten its existence. It was not the first experiment in representative government: Mohammed Ali had made a beginning when he summoned to his court a few influential notables, and requested their views upon any measure he contemplated putting into force. He chose these advisers apparently at random, and they spoke only when invited to do so. The assembly created by Ismail was on paper a more august and formal affair. Each province chose two or three delegates, and elected members were to meet once a year in Cairo, to listen to the reading of a report upon the administrative condition of the country. But their privilege stopped there: they could neither initiate debate, nor question the action of the government. Egypt remained the private domain of the Khedive: ministers, notables, and fellahin, were still his humble servants.

It was evident at this stage that the army held no monopoly of grievances. Influential Egyptians clamoured to be delivered from foreign guidance, the more humble classes from misgovernment. An angry whisper passed round, identifying the Anglo-French control with the Khedive's pretensions, and the misfortunes of Egypt. Fierce and often misplaced criticism was directed against the law of liquidation. It was not an ideal settlement: but on the whole its provisions preserved a fair balance between creditor and debtor, and between Europe and Egypt. No doubt in common with all forms of compromise, the law had its weak points. It had cancelled the *Mukabula* at the expense of individuals, tempted, or compelled, to subscribe to it; but it left undiminished the number of highly-paid foreign officials,[1] and the educated Egyptian asked why, if his country was on the verge of bankruptcy, it should still be

[1] Royle in *The Egyptian Campaigns* (Chapter VIII) gives the number in 1880 as 1,325, and their aggregate cost to the State as £373,704.

saddled with so great a burden. Moreover in his judgment there was no corresponding improvement in the procedure of government. The same inefficiency inspired the central administration, and the same corruption prevailed among provincial agents. Arabi, now under secretary of state, egged on by colleagues, fanned the discontent. Sami, a crafty and dangerous man, was again a minister, with a programme frankly revolutionary. He meditated the overthrow of the Khedive, the ejection of the foreign controllers and the establishment of an Egyptian republic with himself as president. But Egypt was unprepared to go to these lengths. Men of moderate opinion distrusted a leader of such extravagant views, and withdrew their support. There was a breach between the notables and the left wing of the movement, and for awhile it seemed as if the latter had overshot the mark. Then the arrival in Cairo of two Turkish commissioners changed the situation. Egypt became convinced that intervention under one form or another was intended, and she braced herself to meet the strain.

Perplexed at the turn Egyptian affairs were taking, Great Britain had consulted France upon the propriety of inviting the Porte to take up the task [1] of restoring calm. It was not the first time the suggestion had been made by the British, and rejected by the French government. When in September, 1881, the Sultan had offered to send troops to Egypt if they were required, Her Majesty's government would have availed themselves very gladly of the proposal, had not France stood in the way. That country was determined to keep the Sultan out of northern Africa, lest his presence there added to her embarrassment in Tunis. It was a substantial objection, and the British government, always sensitive to the danger of provoking Moslem agitation, withdrew. But the Sultan was not so easily put off his design. If,

[1] A despatch written by Lord Granville, the foreign secretary, dated 30th January, 1881, summarizes Great Britain's desires: that Turkey should maintain her suzerainty over Egypt, that Egypt should fulfill her international engagements and that the Powers should protect the development of existing Egyptian institutions. Finally, Europe was to note that Great Britain neither desired to occupy Egypt, nor to join France in intervention. If intervention must be made, she would prefer that Turkey undertook the responsibility.

in face of the opposition of France and England, he might send no troops, there were other ways of reminding Egyptians of his suzerainty. The manœuvre was not particularly successful. The Anglo-French control was unaffected by the despatch of Turkish representatives to Cairo, and Egypt was suspicious of their presence.

Thus came about a union of political parties, of which the army, the most powerful element of the combination, took the leadership. Arabi and his associates were now bent upon destroying the authority of the Khedive. It was a challenge that Her Majesty's government could not pass in silence. Having made up their mind that the tranquillity of Egypt depended upon maintaining the Khedive upon the throne, they refused to watch his complete effacement. It was the first hint of a change of attitude.

The situation had radically altered. In the past it had been the ruler who threatened the welfare of Egypt: it was now a group of reckless men, who would have ruined the country in order to secure their private ends. Egypt had grievances enough and to spare: but revolution would not bring about their reform, and to Great Britain a peaceful Egypt had become a vital necessity. Her communications with the east depended upon the integrity of the Suez Canal, and she could not permit a domestic dispute to threaten them. But still reluctant to depart from the ideals that governed their policy, Her Majesty's government hesitated to take any irrevocable step. They sounded France a second time upon the propriety of inviting Turkey to restore order, and to a counter proposal of joint action by Gambetta, the French prime minister, they returned an unconditional refusal. Thus for the first time in the history of the control the two Powers drifted apart. There was little likelihood of reconciling the difference. England disliked the thought of intervention in Egypt, as hotly as France opposed appeal to the Porte. So discussion languished until the 8th January, 1882, when, provoked by the issue of an Egyptian manifesto,[1]

[1] Sherif Pasha was presumed to be the author of this interesting and moderate document. It declared on the part of Egyptians (i) recognition of the rights of the Sultan and maintenance of the privileges of Egypt; (ii) recognition of the Khedive as a constitutional sovereign; (iii) recognition of the Anglo-French financial

the two Powers addressed to the Khedive a joint note, assuring him of their support. It was a vague document, that indicated neither the extent nor the form of the assistance.[1] Its publication emphasized, no doubt, the unity of the two governments: but the note was a compromise, and, like most compromises, did not accomplish its design. Gambetta was frankly disappointed. He would have taken a bolder course, had he been in a position to do so. But at that moment he could not impose his views upon France. She was heartily tired of military adventures abroad. Substantial slices of territory recently acquired in northern Africa and in southern Asia had satisfied her desire for expansion, and the more reflective Frenchmen were contemplating with anxiety the isolation of their country in Europe. The Republic could count no ally, no friend among the Powers. Gambetta relied for support of his policy on a traditional friendship between France and Egypt, and, no doubt, to France Mohammed Ali had turned for sympathy in his struggle for the possession of Syria. But the recollection of that incident had long since faded from public memory, and Gambetta could not persuade the elector that honour called for French intervention in Egypt. De Freycinet becoming prime minister on the 31st January, 1882, gauged public opinion more accurately. He declared that he would be no party to any military action in Egypt, that he was even opposed to interference of any form or kind. But as crisis drew nearer, he was forced to modify his opinion. He had spoken without sufficient reflection.

The Anglo-French note of the 8th January did not fulfill the expectation of its authors.[2] The Khedive's position

control; (iv) disavowal of revolution; (v) political and religious liberty to all residents; (vi) government by a representative Assembly.

[1] Her Majesty's government added a postscript stating that the note must not be considered as committing England to any particular action, if action should be found necessary.

[2] Lord Granville, the British foreign secretary, aware of this result, endeavoured by a further despatch on the 30th January, 1882, to calm Egyptian opinion. He categorically declared that Great Britain earnestly desired (i) to maintain between Turkey and Egypt the existing relations of sovereign and vassal; (ii) to fulfill international engagements and liabilities; (iii) to protect and perfect the development of existing institutions. Once again the

was not strengthened, the army was not intimidated. In deference to clamour, Tewfik chose a new ministry uncompromisingly national in spirit, of which Mahmud Sami was premier, and Arabi minister of war. Both men at once showed their hands. Arabi intended to get rid of Circassian influence in the army, Sami of foreign interference in the policy of Egypt. The minister of war was the first to act. He accused forty-eight Circassians and Turks, officers and civilians, with conspiring to murder him. Their trial was a travesty of justice. The court-martial violated all ordinary rules of military procedure. It sat behind closed doors, it refused counsel to the prisoners, and it included among its members two officers, whose projected assassination formed the subject of the charge sheet. There could be little doubt of the verdict of a court, that conducted proceedings upon such lines. The accused were found guilty, and exiled for life to the uttermost parts of the Sudan. It was a sentence equivalent in those days to the penalty of death. There were indignant protests against the judgment. The Sultan advised the Khedive to exercise his prerogative, and pardon the victims; the British and French governments protested against the severity of the sentence.[1] But Sami and Arabi had taken the bit between their teeth. They refused point-blank to modify the penalty, they summoned the assembly of notables to support that decision. It was a defiance, to which Great Britain and France replied by ordering ships of war to Alexandria.

Meanwhile Sami was busy in drafting an organic law of his own, that would permit the assembly to vote upon the budget, and thus frustrate the control of Egyptian finance by Great Britain and France. In itself the reform was reasonable enough : it was highly absurd that the elected representatives of Egypt should possess no voice in the administration of their own finance. Unfortunately the concession conflicted with a previous undertaking. The decree of the 18th November, 1876, had definitely established the pro-

despatch affirmed that Great Britain in no circumstances wished either to occupy Egypt, or to be a party to a dual occupation. If intervention there must be, Her Majesty's government would entrust its execution to the Porte.

[1] The Khedive ultimately commuted the sentence to one of exile from Egypt.

cedure to be followed in the preparation and promulgation of the budget. The minister of finance and the two controllers would first prepare estimates of revenue and expenditure, then submit them to the council of ministers, and finally obtain the Khedive's authority to the budget becoming law. When Ismail in the winter of 1878 formed an international ministry with Rivers Wilson and de Blignières as members, Great Britain and France suspended their control over finance, on the understanding that if Egyptians later took the places of the two foreigners, that control would automatically be restored. It was a perfectly reasonable precaution in the interests of the creditors ; for hardly had Wilson and de Blignières settled down to work, than Ismail dismissed the ministry from office. Sami was well aware of these historical facts : but he chose to ignore them, and so brought intervention a step nearer.

No doubt there was room for some readjustment of relations between the control and the ministry : but their attitude towards the Khedive made concession difficult. No good could come from surrender to men of the type of Sami and Arabi, and the British and French governments desired Tewfik to dismiss the ministry from office. That news temporarily brought the two Egyptians to their senses. Hastening to the palace, they made their submission, declared their loyalty to the throne, and begged to be reinstated. They did so the more hurriedly, since public opinion was hardening against them. Their supporters had suddenly become uneasy at the subordination of the government to the military party, and Sultan Pasha, president of the assembly, urged the Khedive to call Sherif Pasha again into counsel. Simultaneously the Porte required all communications from the two Powers to be referred in future to Constantinople for decision. Tewfik thus thought himself strong enough for action. He ordered Arabi to leave the country and Sami to resign, he suspended orders calling up the army reserve, and he announced his intention to govern the country from the palace through the under secretaries of state. Arabi lost both his head and temper. In the company of his officers, he met on the 28th May the assembly in private session, and demanded either his own reinstatement as minister or the deposition of the Khedive.

In the prevailing excitement, administration came to a standstill. Ominous rumours of revolution filled the air, and alarmed the foreign community, and as a measure of precaution the British and French governments reinforced their squadrons lying off Alexandria. It was high time on naval grounds that the step was taken. The Egyptian garrison, under instructions from the ministry of war, were throwing up earthworks that commanded the anchorage of the fleet. Despite protest from the two admirals, the work went on, until losing patience the British admiral angrily ordered the garrison to desist, or he would open fire. Egypt was now in that frame of mind which leads to mischief, and rioting broke out in Alexandria on the 11th June. The town fell into the hands of a savage mob, bent upon pillage and murder. Some fifty Europeans lost their lives that day, and disorder spread to the provinces. In Damanhour, Tanta, and elsewhere, many unoffending foreigners were brutally done to death, and Europeans fled to the sea for safety.[1] If no evidence has been produced to connect Egyptian ministers with provoking these savage incidents, they cannot escape from an equally serious indictment. They did not punish administrative officials, who permitted disorder to spread unchecked, or bring before courts of justice the ringleaders of the disturbance. The identity of the offenders must have been known, and their complicity in the disorder have been reported. Yet no Egyptian suffered for his share in it.

France and England awaking at last to their responsibility, now summoned a conference of the Powers to concert measures that would maintain the respective rights of the Sultan, the Khedive, and Europe in Egypt, preserve to the Egyptian people the privileges secured by successive firmans, and provide for the gradual development of existing constitutional rights. It was high time to come to some common agreement. A dispute originally only between the Khedive and his creditors, was now threatening the overthrow of all authority. Hitherto the country had stood aside, inclining to no party. There was little reason indeed for the fellah

[1] See despatch to the Foreign Secretary, dated the 17th June. It was computed by that day, that 20,000 Christians had fled from Egypt.

to join in the quarrel; he feared and disliked Khedive, ministers and notables impartially. But that instinct of neutrality faded, when Sami Pasha contrived to give rebellion a national air. Then the innate hostility of the fellah to Europeans awoke. Sami had baited the trap cleverly. Egypt was overrun with foreigners who battened on her riches, and any leader promising to purge the country of their presence was then sure of support. From the classrooms of El Azhar, the fortress of Islam in Cairo, Sami drew a host of ardent lieutenants, who passed up and down the countryside, exhorting the fellahin to stand by their country. The ground had been well prepared. Turkey alone remained unimpressed. She refused the joint invitation of England and France, trusting that jealousy would split Europe into two camps. It was her customary, and frequently successful, device: but for once the manœuvre failed. The Ambassadors met in Constantinople on the 23rd June, and took no notice of the absence of an Ottoman colleague. They began by expressing their complete disinterestedness in the future of Egypt. No Power, a preliminary protocol affirmed, sought either territorial or commercial advantage, no Power would act in Egypt independently of its fellows.[1] But while the conference was leisurely feeling its way to a conclusion, the situation in Egypt developed afresh. Once more the garrison of Alexandria began the construction of earthworks protecting Alexandria from the seaward, and once more the British admiral required the Egyptian commander to stop. His summons was answered by a call for a levy *en masse* from the ministry of war. It was a reply that Her Majesty's government were unprepared to accept, and Admiral Seymour was instructed to present an ultimatum to the garrison of Alexandria. No answer was received, and on the 11th July the British fleet opened fire upon the forts. The Egyptian artillery was soon overpowered, and on the following morning the garrison withdrew to the village of Kafr el Dawar, where Arabi established his headquarters. Pillage and incendiarism marked the line of their retreat.

Her Majesty's government had duly communicated to

[1] Lord Dufferin, the British representative, prudently added a proviso to this confession. Below his signature, he wrote: "sauf le cas de force majeure."

France the tenour of their instructions to Admiral Seymour : but that country refused to be a party to the bombardment. She recalled her ships, and ordered their commander to watch the entrance to the Suez Canal. Thus came to an abrupt and final end, the harmony that had existed between the two Powers since 1876. Concord was never re-established, and a bitter rivalry replaced an honourable understanding. Yet it is as unreasonable to suppose that France withdrew her ships from Alexandria in order to embarrass Great Britain, as to believe that the latter began the bombardment in order to lay her hand on Egypt. If the French government held that the conference of ambassadors in Constantinople tied their hands, Her Majesty's ministers did not acknowledge the obligation. Each party was entitled to its own belief upon that point. Other and more substantial causes led to the defection of France at this juncture. Like Great Britain, but from different reasons, she was reluctant to take a step that would involve responsibilities in Egypt. For France the Suez Canal was a commercial not a political interest, and its integrity of less national importance than the maintenance at full strength of her armies on the Rhine. Thus the chamber of deputies would vote no credit for naval or military operations in Egypt, or agree to withdraw from the frontier a single rifle for service in Egyptian territory. Politics also are less fluid in England than in France, and the system of party government in the first is more highly developed. In the House of Commons a British prime minister could confidently count upon a majority to approve any action taken by him in Egypt or elsewhere : the prime minister of France was less certain of support. De Freycinet had already tested the temper of the chamber of deputies, and found it discouraging. With difficulty he had obtained a small naval credit : he met with signal defeat, when more boldly he demanded 25,000,000 francs to meet the cost of equipping and maintaining a naval squadron in the Suez Canal waters. His proposals were modest enough. He intended to co-operate with Great Britain in the protection of the Canal, and to land 8,000 marines in Port Said and in Ismailia to guarantee French interests. But the chamber would not hear him. Clemenceau spoke against the proposal, asking pointedly, " How can you assure us that the

occupation of the Suez Canal will not drag France into further action ? " To that question, de Freycinet could think of no satisfactory reply.

Meanwhile the conference of ambassadors continued their deliberations, and Turkey asked permission to be heard. It was the opportunity that the British government had been seeking, and they seized it to inform the Sultan of the conditions that must now govern his intervention in Egypt. The situation had materially altered during the visit of three new imperial commissioners,[1] and Her Majesty's government in their own interests, as well as in those of Egypt, could not permit a second fiasco of the kind. They did not contest the title of the Sultan to intervene if, and when, he desired : but the bombardment of Alexandria and the landing of marines and naval ratings had thrown upon Great Britain as well as Turkey the responsibility of maintaining order. That reflection coloured perhaps a little harshly the tone of their communications to the Porte. The latter was now at liberty to send to Egypt a force not exceeding 6,000 rifles : but the conditions attached to the concession made acceptance highly improbable. Great Britain required, first, to be informed of the Turkish plan of operations ; secondly, to be assured that disembarkation would take place at Alexandria ; and, lastly, to be satisfied that Turkish units would evacuate Egypt simultaneously with British. The Ottoman government rejected the terms incontinently, and declined further responsibility for disorder. Yet the conditions were reasonable enough in the circumstances. Six thousand troops were ample for police purposes. Nor could Turkey reasonably object to the exclusion of Port Said as a port of disembarkation. The Suez Canal lay without the area of revolt, and it was the business of Great Britain to keep it so. Finally, it would have been impolitic in the interests of foreigners to leave them permanently to the tender mercies of the Porte. The administrative record of the Ottoman government was little higher than that of the Khedivial, and Great Britain had to consider the protection and safety of the European community in Egypt.

Smarting under the rebuff, the Sultan took his revenge

[1] Their vague mission failed. Sami and Arabi had no mind to listen to the remonstrances of Turkey.

upon Arabi, regarding that Egyptian as the prime cause of the trouble. He declared him a rebel upon the ground that his conduct had led to the bombardment of Alexandria, and called upon the people of Egypt to rally round the Khedive. Arabi remained unmoved. From his camp at Kafr el Dawar, a few miles south of Alexandria, he proclaimed that "irreconcileable war now exists between the Egyptians and the English," he summoned all men of military age to the colours, he took every beast of burden in the country for the army transport, he seized all foodstuffs for the supply of the troops, and he requisitioned the labour of the peasants. He lived in a fool's paradise.

Tactically the bombardment of Alexandria had been premature. No operation of this type was likely to be completely successful, unless troops were at hand as well as ships, and Arabi accomplished his evacuation of Alexandria unmolested and unpursued. Not until the 25th July did the first brigade of Wolseley's expeditionary force reach the port, and not until the 12th August did Wolseley himself land. He took a hasty survey of the situation. Arabi was still at Kafr el Dawar, a few miles south of Alexandria, but report credited the Egyptian with intention of blocking the Suez Canal. The British commander was too quick for him, and on the 18th August the expeditionary force disembarked at Ismailia. It was a bitter pill for de Lesseps, no friend to England, to swallow, and he called upon his government to defend the neutrality of the Canal. But France had already made her bed: she could not now lie elsewhere, and de Lesseps' appeal fell on deaf ears. Meanwhile Arabi, learning of the British change of front, had hurried to Tel el Kebir, a village lying midway between Ismailia and Zagazig, and thrown up lines of defence. His engineers had chosen a strong position, flanked and supported by a number of redoubts. By the 20th August the bulk of the Egyptian army had been transferred from Kafr el Dawar, and on the 24th Arabi dammed the canal that supplied Ismailia with potable water. Wolseley marched at once to cut the obstruction, and to occupy Kassassin, a village a few kilometres to the front of the enemy's lines. The canal was cleared, but on the 28th Arabi led a determined attack upon the British advanced line. Victory

hung in the balance until dusk, when Wolseley succeeded in turning the enemy's flank. The threat was sufficient, and Arabi retreated hurriedly behind his earthworks. A second engagement took place on the 9th September, and the British commander having brought up his reserves, prepared to deliver the final blow. It was made at dawn four days later. The fighting was soon over. Taken by surprise, the Egyptians put up a poor defence : only the artillery and a battalion of household troops stood their ground. In less than half an hour the cavalry were in hot pursuit of the flying enemy, and the infantry had begun their tiring march on Cairo. Its inhabitants offered no resistance to the entry of the troops, and thus began that intervention and occupation which Great Britain had struggled so earnestly to avoid.

PART III—RECONSTRUCTION

CHAPTER V

FOUNDATIONS

The victory of British arms at Tel el Kebir brought insurrection to a sudden end. Arabi surrendered his person, his associates fled into hiding, a Khedivial decree disbanded the army, Sherif Pasha took up the reins of government, and Egypt recovered her accustomed habits of life. Order was re-established throughout the country : the customary processes of administration were resumed. The fellahin were back in the fields, the official and business classes of the population had returned to their offices and counting-houses. Broadly, therefore, Her Majesty's government had accomplished their mission in Egypt. They had restored to the Khedive his authority, to the country its tranquillity, and the time had come to consider the next step. It was full of perplexities. Withdrawal of the British garrison, the obvious course, was impracticable, until Egypt could stand without support. There was no indication of her capacity to do so in these early days. Conspiracy, it is true, had overshot its mark : but the injustice and oppression that had lent it force, pressed as heavily as ever upon the people of Egypt. Their legitimate grievances must first be redressed, before Great Britain relinquished her hold. It was a task that Egypt herself could not perform. Centuries of incompetent and extravagant government had sapped and exhausted her vitality and resources, and relief could come only through the protection and guidance of a disinterested Power.

The misery of the people was plain enough, its causes no less obvious. Indolent and corrupt administration was at the root of the trouble. The fellah could call

neither body nor property his own. Taxation of land was purely arbitrary, fixed by Khedivial decree: the State did not take into account either the quality of the land, or the capacity of the cultivator to pay. He had no means of disputing his assessment, or of obtaining a term of grace. The law was inexorable. The debtor must pay, or the State seized his crops and cattle, and sold them in the open market. The Central government exercised little supervision over their agents. They required a certain sum from each province, they were indifferent how the money was obtained.[1] The humble peasant had no redress. His petitions were unread, his complaints were not investigated.[2] Business suffered as severely as agriculture. There was no branch of industry that escaped ruinous taxation, no class of the community that did not pay heavily for the privilege of Egyptian nationality. Taxes were imposed and collected, without regard to equity: that on salt was one instance, upon river craft a second.[3] The former Anglo-French control had deplored the evil, and endeavoured to remedy it; but the claims of the bondholders blocked the way, and the production of a budget that balanced expenditure with revenue was of greater importance than alleviating the wretchedness of the peasantry. Yet some permanent improvement might have been accomplished, but for the interference in government of Arabi and his officers. Con-

[1] Not until the report of the Commission of Inquiry in 1877 was published did the ministry of finance furnish cultivators with formal receipts for payment of the land tax.

[2] In *Egypt No. 1, 1900*, Lord Cromer recalls the answer given by the Inspector-General of Upper Egypt to a member of the Commission of Inquiry, who asked a pertinent question upon the point: "*Pour les impôts le fellah ne peut se plaindre: il sait qu'on agit par ordre supérieur. C'est le Gouvernment lui-même qui les réclame. A qui voulez-vous qu'il se plaigne?*"

[3] The State claimed monopoly of the sale of salt. Sometimes its own agents undertook the distribution of the commodity; at others, the sale was farmed. Whatever the procedure, the people suffered. A village had to take so many pounds of salt per head, whether its residents could consume the quantity or not. It was a poll-tax, in effect, and complaint against its inequalities went unattended. Equally arbitrary and obnoxious was the tax imposed upon craft passing under the bridges that carried the railway across the river and canals. See page 42, *Egypt after the War* (Murray, London, 1883), by H. Villiers Stuart.

fusion grew greater, and control, never very rigid over the expenditure of public money, vanished. Promotions in the army, and appointments in the civil service, were made without regard to the merits of the individual, still less to the imperative need for economy.[1] Existing taxes were increased to meet these extravagances, and in despair cultivators turned to the usurer. It was a profession profitable enough in Egypt when practised on a humble scale, but unattractive to respectable banks and corporations, that looked for security as well as high rates of interest. From time immemorial the village capitalist, Greek or Armenian, enjoyed a monopoly of the trade. But he took his risks. There was then no protection for the mortgagee, since Egyptian law practically forbade the sale of the property of a defaulting debtor. That immunity disappeared with the creation of the Mixed Tribunals in 1876, and the European from that year onwards competed with the village moneylender for the patronage of the fellah. It was the climax of the latter's misfortune. He was unable to resist the temptation to borrow, and his indebtedness steadily increased.[2]

But excessive and arbitrary taxation was not the only grievance of the fellah : he was also the victim of a hateful system of conscription. Ambition and vanity had persuaded the rulers of Egypt to raise standing armies out of all proportion to the needs and resources of their kingdom.[3]

[1] Two instances may be quoted. First Arabi's action on the 13th March, 1882, in promoting five officers to the rank of Lewa (Brigadier-General) and 29 others to the ranks of Miralai (Colonel) and Kaimakam (Lieut.-Colonel), when no vacancies existed (footnote, page 249, *La Question d'Egypte*, by de Freycinet) ; and secondly, the creation of 3,363 new posts in the civil service between the years 1880 and 1882 (*Egypt No. 4, 1889*).

[2] Mr. F. S. Clarke, in *Egypt No. 6, 1888*, draws a gloomy picture of the cultivator at this period. His indebtedness to European lenders rose from £5,000,000 in 1876 to £7,000,000 in 1882. In addition he owed the village usurers £4,000,000.

[3] Before the Porte with the help of the Powers reduced its rebellious vassal to order, Mohammed Ali could reckon upon an army of 270,000 men. The firman of the 13th February, 1841, confined the Egyptian army to the more modest establishment of 18,000. That restriction did not please Ismail, and on the 8th June, 1873, the Sultan granted him a firman "*d'augmenter ou de diminuer selon le besoin, sans qu' aucune limite lui soit imposée, le nombre de mes troupes Impériales d'Egypte.*"

Immature lads were dragged from the fields and marched in chains to the barracks. The army was never popular in Egypt, and its conditions as late as 1882 were barbarous. The troops were given neither sufficient food nor decent accommodation.[1] Their superiors robbed them of the first, the government did not furnish them with the second. There was no provision for the sick and wounded. Clot Bey, creator of the army medical services, had left Egypt on the death of his patron Mohammed Ali, and his organization no longer existed. The promises made to the soldier were frequently ignored. His miserable pay was in arrear, his issues of clothing kept back. He was detained in the service for months after his legal term had expired, and he languished forgotten in the Sudan, until death put an end to his troubles. Little wonder that desertion and self-mutilation were common offences. But no penalty, however severe, could stop either practice, and the conscript ran away or maimed himself in the vain hope of escaping service in the army. He was seldom successful. The whole world was against him, even his own kinsmen. Draconic punishment pursued a village that failed to surrender a deserter or connived at the flight of a recruit. A court-martial judged the guilt of its inhabitants, and the ministry of war called upon them to provide three fresh victims in place of the missing man.

Hardly less savage was the corvée, an instrument of government, that swept provinces and districts clean of able-bodied males in order to construct works, often of doubtful utility. It was at the best a wasteful expedient, at the worst an arbitrary abuse of power. The saving to the State was poor compensation for the withdrawal of labour from the land, and the incidence invariably fell upon the humbler classes of the population. The mudir or governor of the province dared not protect his unfortunate people : for he too was at the mercy of a capricious and careless government.[2] His career depended upon satisfying the

[1] See page 142, *England in Egypt*, 6th edition (Edward Arnold, London, 1899), by Alfred Milner.

[2] Villiers Stuart remarked that " a change of ministers heralded a change of mudirs, whatever their merits " (page 34, *Egypt after the War*).

whims of authority, his capacity was judged by his success in the collection of taxes. In return ministers seldom questioned his procedure. The kurbash and preventive imprisonment were then the two pillars of provincial government, and the jails were crowded with men, beaten and detained upon mere suspicion. Nor were law-abiding Egyptians much better off. Crime was rife. Brigandage and blackmail marched hand in hand: justice was halting and its procedure archaic. From time to time spasmodic efforts had been made to purge the tribunals of their grosser faults, and hasten the slow processes of the law. But these endeavours ended in failure: between an apathetic government and an ignorant bench there was little chance of radical reform. Other services of the State needed reconstruction no less. Irrigation was one. Incompetent engineers muddled away the valuable summer water, and distributed it inequitably. At the apex of the Delta stood Mohammed Ali's barrage, unused and unrepaired: certain testimony of the disorganization that distinguished the administration of Egypt during this period.

Such briefly was the condition of the country in 1882. It was a depressing picture to contemplate: the legacy of a spendthrift and careless government. Mohammed Ali had ruled with a heavy but discerning hand. If he taxed his subjects unmercifully, he did at least protect them from the exactions of subordinates. A patriarchal equity inspired his rule. He attended to complaints, he welcomed petitions, and he punished offenders without regard to their station in life. His descendants did not inherit the same capacity for government. Abbas, morose and reactionary, frankly disbelieved in progress; Said, a more good-natured man, lacked persistence. Ismail was a greater disappointment. He spoke of Egypt as forming part of Europe; he desired to be counted among the kings and princes of that continent. No hint of disaster then marred the promise of his reign. An increased production of cotton benefited the cultivator, a tolerably honest administration still assured a decent standard of public security. Later Ismail threw restraint to the winds. He mortgaged the present, he sacrificed the future, and his reckless expenditure reacted upon the community. Despite a larger income, the fellah could not pay the taxes:

despite a larger revenue, the State could not make two ends meet. It was a strange paradox. Misery had overtaken an industrious and frugal people, and insolvency a government whose natural resources were unimpaired. In the hope of reviving Egyptian credit, the Powers had restricted the Khedive's personal expenditure, created a commission of public debt, and carried through a law of liquidation. Neither France nor Great Britain then suspected the implication of that law, nor did Egypt complain of foreign control over finance.[1] Yet a little reflection would have demonstrated the certain consequences of separating finance from administration, or of endeavouring to reduce confusion to order by remonstrance and advice.

Great Britain was the first to grasp these elementary truths, and entered without enthusiasm upon a perplexing and delicate task. It was full of anxieties. The intentions of the occupation were habitually misunderstood. France and Turkey suspected them of covering a design upon Egyptian territory, the Khedive and his ministers regarded the presence of the troops as convenient supports of their authority, and the holders of Egyptian securities thought of the occupation as the natural protector of their property. Reluctantly and slowly the British government came to three conclusions: first, that the permanent tranquillity of Egypt depended upon the removal of administrative grievances; secondly, that their removal could only be accomplished through reconstruction of government; and, thirdly, that they themselves must indicate the nature of that reconstruction. The programme was in effect no departure from the ideals that Great Britain had professed earlier, nor was it inspired by any unworthy motive: the speeches and despatches of ministers are sufficient testimony on that point.[2] The cabinet now spoke with refreshing frankness: the occupation would come to an end, when Egypt was provided with honest and ordered government. The announcement divided Europe. Ger-

[1] The Assembly of Notables, when convoked by Tewfik, expressly excluded from its claim to vote the Budget, discussion upon revenues assigned to the commission of the public debt.

[2] See speeches by Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons, 14th November, 1882, and by Mr. Chamberlain at Ashton-under-Lyne on the 19th December, 1882, and Lord Granville's circular to the Powers dated 3rd January, 1883 (*No. 3 Egypt, 1883*).

many, Italy, and Austria saw nothing unreasonable in it, France and Turkey contested the claim. The displeasure of France was intelligible, but little logical. By her own action she had dissolved a partnership that began in 1876, and forfeited the right to influence the future. The occupation had extinguished the joint control, and France could not reinstate it. Nor could Turkey reasonably complain of exclusion. Her opportunity had come, and she had failed to seize it. She had hesitated when resolution was required, she had procrastinated when decision was imperative. Twice Her Majesty's government pressed her to restore order in Egypt, twice she delayed until the golden moment had gone. Events had moved too quickly for Ottoman diplomacy. But France, dragging Turkey at her heels, refused to accept defeat. Her leaders spoke and wrote as if the occupation had changed nothing, and her press encouraged that mistaken belief. Great Britain did not desire to humble a proud neighbour, or embitter public opinion, but she could not permit another Power to participate in the reconstruction of Egypt. The knowledge was the more poignant to Frenchmen in that the British government had accomplished the occupation of Egypt at so little cost of life or treasure. The evils that France anticipated had not come to pass: the prediction of de Lesseps that Arabi and the army would fight to the last was unfulfilled. A single battle had broken resistance, a handful of cavalry had captured the capital. Yet not until the Khedivial government intimated their desire to terminate the Anglo-French control did France finally relinquish her hopes. It was a heavy price to pay for an error of judgment. But French diplomacy could not dispute the facts. Ismail had created the control in question, Tewfik his successor with perfect propriety could withdraw it. So having entered their protest,[1] the French government bethought themselves of compensation. Lord Granville listened sympathetically. He had no wish to push his triumph too far, and he offered France the presidency of the commission of the public debt with enlarged attributions.

[1] On the 20th November, the diplomatic agent of the French Government in Cairo informed Sherif Pasha, "le gouvernement français ne peut accorder un acquiescence, explicite ou implicite du changement de l'organisation actuelle."

The concession was refused,[1] and Granville spoke more plainly. Recalling the difficulties that joint control had created, he announced the appointment of a British financial adviser, who would represent European and Egyptian interests. It was the first intimation to the world that Great Britain claimed a privileged position in Egyptian administration. On the 7th November Sherif Pasha had formally demanded the suppression of the Anglo-French control as injurious to the interests of his country ; on the 13th January, 1883, he announced that it was terminated. He had not overstepped his right.[2]

Freed from this embarrassment, Her Majesty's ministers were now at liberty to consider reform of government in Egypt. The commission of inquiry in 1878 had disclosed many abuses, British agents and consuls had indicated others, and from their reports it was possible to compile a long list of grievances. But administrative reconstruction requires something more substantial than the bare recital of deficiencies : acquaintance with their causes and knowledge of the proper remedies are also necessary. Upon these points the cabinet possessed no accurate information, and Mr. Gladstone instructed Lord Dufferin to report upon the facts. The choice was a happy one. Dufferin's attractive personality masked an alert and brilliant mind. If his imagination was easily stirred, an unexpected discretion usually held it in check. He had had a long and varied experience of life. His position as ambassador in Constantinople had permitted him to watch the course of history in Egypt, and he was well acquainted with the facts that had led to the intervention of Great Britain. He was in short admirably equipped for the task of investigation, and invested with the title of High Commissioner, he arrived in Cairo on the 6th November, 1882. His instructions did not lack variety. He was to assure the suzerainty of the Sultan

[1] Cocheris (page 158, *Situation International de l'Egypte et du Soudan*) states that the French ambassador in London claimed on behalf of his government the inclusion of a Frenchman in the council of ministers. Lord Granville was a little amused at that naïve demand.

[2] See *Documents diplomatiques Egypte, 1882*, Monsieur Duclerc à Monsieur Tissot, 4th January, 1883, "*Quelque regret que nous en eprouvions, nous acceptons la situation qui nous est faite.*"

in accordance with imperial firmans, to prepare the way for the evacuation of the British garrison, to provide for the participation of Egyptians in the government of the country, to obtain payment of the cost of the occupation, and finally to formulate adequate guarantees for the safety of the foreign community. It was one of those contradictory missions that delight a versatile mind.

But before Dufferin could attack the task, he had first to decide the fate of Arabi. In common with others, this Egyptian was lying in prison, awaiting the pleasure of his sovereign. It was not an ideal arrangement, nor were Her Majesty's government altogether satisfied with it. At an early stage in the campaign, they had considered the disposal of prisoners, and desired the Khedive to undertake their custody and punishment. But this arrangement, though convenient enough to the field command, did not release Great Britain from a moral responsibility, and she reserved the right to confirm sentences of death passed upon prisoners by Egyptian courts.[1] That stipulation saved the lives of Arabi and his followers : for the Khedive would have shot them out of hand, as authors of his misfortunes. Thus before trial took place, the British government had first to decide whether the accused were rebels, or simply prisoners of war. It was a nice point. Technically, no doubt, Arabi was a rebel. He had conspired against his sovereign, he had refused to obey the Sultan of Turkey's command. In law he was a traitor, by custom he merited the penalty of death ; but public opinion in England was less confident, and a section stoutly defended Arabi, protesting that this Egyptian was the victim of misgovernment, and a purer patriot than his political adversaries. It was curious reasoning ; but Mr. Gladstone fastened upon it, and ordered a preliminary inquiry. He was in a quandary. He sympathized with the Khedive, but he was determined to exclude questions of policy from the trial. An administrative investigation seemed to promise a way out of the difficulty. There had been talk of Arabi's complicity in the incendiarism and rioting that preceded and followed the bombardment of Alexandria and Mr. Gladstone was persuaded that he would achieve his aim, if Arabi could be tried on any charge but that

[1] Despatch of Foreign Office dated 28th August, 1882.

of rebellion. Unfortunately, no evidence on the point was forthcoming, and the finding of the court of inquiry increased the embarrassment of the prime minister.[1] He yielded to clamour, and was now determined to keep Arabi alive. The ingenious Dufferin found at last a means of satisfying Mr. Gladstone and preserving military conventions. On the 3rd December a court-martial assembled, and Arabi pleaded guilty to the charge of rebellion. He was formally condemned to death, the Khedive converting the punishment into perpetual exile from Egypt. Mr. Gladstone had gained his point, but the Khedive did not pardon the affront to his dignity. He thought of Arabi as a personal enemy and desired his death as a lesson to all Egyptians who opposed the throne.

Lord Dufferin was now at leisure to pursue his proper mission. Between the alternatives, annexation and occupation, Her Majesty's government had already made their choice. They had renounced the first, and sent Lord Dufferin to reconcile the second with the legitimate rights of the Egyptian people. His duty was to lay the foundations of self-government. It was a delicate and perplexing business, since the political education of a downtrodden and backward people cannot be hastened. However favourable the soil, the seed may fail to germinate and the harvest be ungarnered. Lord Dufferin harboured no illusions : but to convince Egyptians of his good faith, he sought to suppress an abuse of government, more intolerable and iniquitous than its fellows. His choice fell upon the kourbash. It was a happy inspiration. That terrible instrument of authority had no merit but what tradition can confer. Every petty official used the whip upon the fellah without restraint, and mudirs and omdas closed their eyes to the practice. But provincial authority did not surrender its prerogative without a long and obstinate struggle, and the governing classes supported the attitude. They ridiculed a decree that

[1] On the 17th October, Colonel Sir Charles Wilson reported on weight of evidence "no British court-martial would convict Arabi of any greater crime than of taking part in a successful military revolt against the Khedive." On the other hand, it is worth while remarking that Broadley, Arabi's counsel, was none too confident on the point. See letter to Wilfred Blunt, page 468, *Secret History of the English Occupation* (Fisher Unwin, London, 1907).

abolished the only form of punishment understood in Egypt, and the ministries of finance, interior, justice and public works were in despair. To the kourbash the first trusted for collection of the revenue,[1] through it the second and third obtained evidence of crime, and the fourth the labour of the corvée. The whip was used for many months after the publication of the decree: oppression had been so long his bedfellow, that the Egyptian placed no faith in decrees and rescripts. Like his betters, he did not understand that the old order of things was passing away, and Lord Dufferin could not stop to inform him of the fact.

The High Commissioner was busy with weightier matters: it was in his mind to provide Egypt with a measure of constitutional government, that would support the authority of the Khedive, and yet check his abuse of it. It was no easy matter to co-ordinate two such different aims, and the organic law of the 1st May, 1883, must be judged under that reserve. If the author did not establish the right of Egyptians to control the executive, he admitted them to a share of the conduct of national business. Before the throne could impose fresh taxation, an elected assembly had first to give its consent: before ministers could introduce new legislation, a legislative council must examine the proposals. It was a notable departure from the past. But malicious tongues were already whispering that Lord Dufferin was preparing the way for annexation, and the rumour spread, until the world believed the gossip true. It was wholly false. Time and again Mr. Gladstone had declared the contrary, and announced his intention to consult Europe upon the future of Egypt,[2] and Dufferin was loyal to his chief.

[1] The British Commissioner of the Domains roundly declared that, without the kourbash, his department would be unable to collect its rents.

[2] Two extracts from speeches made by Mr. Gladstone will suffice. Speaking on the 24th July, 1882, in the House of Commons on the subject of Egypt, he said: "Great Britain is sending her troops to re-establish order, and to restore to the Khedive the authority that he has lost. She will formally submit to a European Conference the regulation of the Egyptian question." Again on the 16th August he declared: "As soon as order is re-established we shall submit the Egyptian question to Europe. The conference of ambassadors at Constantinople will, and should, resume its sittings."

Diplomacy, it must be said, had behaved with decorum and good sense over the occupation. The conference of ambassadors continued to sit in Constantinople, while British troops were landing in Alexandria, and Europe accepted a situation that she could neither avert nor modify. But that was the limit of her good nature, and she spoke now of her right to participate in the task of reconstruction. It was a claim that the British government were determined to deny. They were ready to consult their neighbours upon the political future of Egypt, but the rest was England's own business. There followed diplomatic inquiries veiled and discreet, but intended to elicit more definite information about the design and duration of the occupation. The cabinet would not commit themselves. Administrative reform can never be expeditious, and Europe must await the end in patience. Such was the burden of Lord Granville's historic note to the Powers dated the 3rd January, 1883.[1]

In the early summer of that year Lord Dufferin completed his mission, and Sir Edward Malet resumed charge of Egypt. Conditions were no more propitious, and Malet was confronted with problems to which he could find no solution. Finance was one. A number of Englishmen at the instance of Lord Dufferin had come to put the Egyptian house in order. Evelyn Wood was occupied with the army, Valentine Baker with the police ; Scott Moncrieff was re-organizing the Irrigation services, Fitzgerald the State accounts, Gibson the Survey, Clifford Lloyd police and prison reform. All these men required money to accomplish their task, and Auckland Colvin, the financial adviser, had none to give. He hardly knew how to meet current expenditure. The budget year of 1882 had ended in a large deficit : the outlook was even more gloomy. The Sudan was absorbing

[1] "Although for the present the British force remains in Egypt for the purpose of public tranquillity, Her Majesty's Government are desirous of withdrawing it as soon as the state of the country and the organization of proper means for the maintenance of the Khedive's authority will admit of it. In the meantime the position in which Her Majesty's government are placed towards His Highness imposes upon them the duty of giving advice with the object of securing that the order of things to be established shall be of a satisfactory character, and possess the elements of stability and progress."

thousands of pounds, the foreign community were clamouring for payment of losses sustained before and after the bombardment of Alexandria, and Her Majesty's government were insisting upon a substantial contribution towards the cost of the army of occupation. On top of these calls came an epidemic of cholera, that devastated the countryside, and brought business to a standstill. Colvin called for retrenchment, and invited Malet, the British agent and consul-general, to support that policy. But Wood and the others were no less insistent, and the harassed Malet found himself between two fires. It was a situation from which he should have been relieved before. His duties had changed, and he was unable to change with them. His life had been spent in diplomacy, a profession more at home in recording opinions than manipulating figures, and Malet could not decide between retrenchment and development. Prior to the occupation, he had filled his office with distinction. They were arduous and difficult days, when neither he nor his French colleague could say overnight what the morrow would bring forth. Through the perplexities of the dual control Malet passed unscathed. His good humour was proof against every trial, his common sense was always ready with a convenient compromise. But he was a man who took no credit for the exercise of these homely qualities, and parliament misinterpreted his endeavour to secure a fair trial for Arabi. None the less, the critics were right ; Egypt required at this juncture a bolder and more experienced helmsman than Malet, and with characteristic modesty the latter offered his resignation. It was accepted, and Evelyn Baring, then financial member of the Viceroy's council in India, took the vacant place.

CHAPTER VI

SUPERSTRUCTURE

Baring [1] reached Cairo, when Her Majesty's government were contemplating a sensible reduction in the strength of the army of occupation. It was a measure in the opinion of the Liberal party long overdue. Egypt had recovered from her unnatural disorder, and honest government had become the best guarantee of future tranquillity. British troops could not indefinitely police the country, and the cabinet thought it time that the recreated Egyptian army should undertake the duty. The Khedivial government shared that view. Their army was no longer the undisciplined rabble that had broken and fled at Tel el Kebir. From the remnants a handful of British officers had succeeded in creating a small but respectable force, and in inspiring new and worthier ideals among the rank and file. Privileges common to soldiers of other nations, but hitherto withheld from the Egyptian conscript, had been conceded, and the offences of self-mutilation and desertion had decreased in consequence. So confident was Evelyn Wood, the sirdar, of his capacity to maintain order in Egypt, that he advocated the withdrawal to Alexandria of all British troops in the country,[2] and a substantial reduction of their numbers. The recommendation coincided with Mr. Gladstone's wishes. Not only did he sincerely desire to redeem his political pledges on the subject of Egypt, but he was also

[1] Although he was not created Baron Cromer till 1892, it will be convenient henceforth to speak of him under that title. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1858, was a commissioner of the Egyptian public debt 1877–79, comptroller-general 1879–80, financial member of the council at Calcutta 1880–83. In 1899 he became Viscount, and three years later Earl of Cromer.

[2] Despatch by the secretary of state for foreign affairs dated 6th September, 1883.

extremely anxious to get rid of the cost of maintaining this overseas army. It had become an embarrassing charge to the cabinet, less accustomed then than now to spend public money profusely. In the distant eighties, a chancellor of the exchequer thought twice before he added a penny to the income tax, and parliament kept a jealous and watchful eye upon naval and military expenditure. Too many troops were locked up in Egypt to please the supporters of the government. And since there was no hope that Egypt would be in a position to contribute much to the cost of maintaining an army of occupation, the cabinet were agreed that no alternative existed but to reduce its numbers. Cromer arrived to bring a fresh mind to bear upon the subject. There was little to reflect over. The Khedive and his ministers, backed by Wood, were convinced of their capacity to maintain order, Her Majesty's government earnestly desired to escape from that duty. Cromer did not dispute either point of view, and on the 31st October the War Office fixed the future garrison of Egypt at three infantry battalions and six guns. Lord Dufferin has recorded the grant of representative government to Egypt as the best evidence of Great Britain's disinterestedness : the decision to reduce the army of occupation within twelve months of Tel el Kebir to the strength of an ordinary frontier station, was still more dramatic proof. It was a convincing answer to the governments and politicians, who questioned England's good faith.

Before a soldier moved, Great Britain countermanded the instructions. Trouble in the Sudan had come to a head, and Cromer recanted his belief. The military situation had gone from bad to worse, and a revolutionary Arab was in possession of all territory south and west of Khartoum. He was Mohammed Ahmed, the Mahdi. Incompetent governors, corrupt subordinates, and neglected and weakened garrisons, had reduced Egyptian authority in the Sudan to narrow limits. Each endeavour to defeat the Mahdi had ended in failure, each reverse had increased the rebel's following. From a remote island in the White Nile, the spirit of insurrection had spread far and wide. Of Egyptian administration south and west of Khartoum, no trace remained : the entire Arab population had gone over to the

Mahdi's cause.[1] Lord Dufferin had marked the danger to Egypt, and commented caustically upon her methods of administering the dependency.[2] Her Majesty's government, kept informed, had warned the Khedive to expect no assistance from England, and recommended His Highness to consider the abandonment of his rights over the Sudan. That unpalatable advice they continued to impress upon him, until catastrophe at the close of the year 1883 forced them into more direct action. Though shaken by news of the disastrous end of Hicks' expedition into Kordofan, the Khedive and his ministers were still unprepared to yield their point, and they announced their intention to wipe out the memory of defeat in victory. It was an heroic, but imprudent declaration: the Khedivial government had neither the troops nor the money to undertake war. The army was no longer at their disposal, the national revenue equally out of their reach. But reverse in the Sudan stung Egyptian pride to the quick. It had suffered a foreign occupation of the lower valley of the Nile: it could not submit at the hands of an ignorant Arab to the loss of the upper. Sherif rushed on his fate. Forbidden the help of British officers on full pay, he engaged the services of a handful of Englishmen on the retired list. Colonel Hicks was commissioned as commander-in-chief of Egyptian troops in the Sudan, and left for Khartoum in February, 1883. It was a forlorn mission. Unrecognized by his own government, at the head of an inadequate and untrained force, Hicks took the field in the autumn. The issue of the campaign was never in doubt. Overcome with thirst and fatigue, the unfortunate Egyptians stumbled blindly from one ambush into another. Their remorseless enemy knew the secret of desert warfare better than they. Skilfully concealing his spearmen in the depressions and folds of the desert, the Mahdi fell upon his adversaries and cut them to pieces. Thus in the desert of

[1] Chapter IX records these events.

[2] See his report to the Egyptian minister of the Sudan dated 7th February, 1883: "The recent disturbances (in the Sudan) were mainly to be attributed to the misgovernment and cruel exactions of the local Egyptian authorities at Khartoum, and that whatever might be the pretension of the Mahdi to a Divine mission, his chief strength was derived from the despair and misery of the native population." This was plain speaking.

Kordofan on the 5th November, 1883, vanished the last hope of holding the Sudan. It was the penalty of misgovernment.

Impatiently Cromer sat in Cairo awaiting a sign. Hicks had left Khartoum with two months' rations in hand : it was now the middle of November, and there was still no news. Ignorance of the conditions in the Sudan added to the British agent's perplexity. The reports and documents made gloomy reading : tragic evidence of the decay that brooded over the land. It did not take Cromer long to reach the dismal conclusion that whatever the fate of Hicks' column,[1] the Khedivial government could not maintain their authority in the Sudan. The strain of financing the administration had become intolerable, and in her own interest Egypt must be relieved of the burden. Revenue did not balance expenditure. By the spring of 1883, there was already an estimated deficit of £100,000 ; six months later the sum required had mounted to five times that figure. Military expenditure no doubt accounted in part for it : but the Sudan government had been drifting into insolvency for many years.[2]

Towards the end of November, the first whisper of disaster reached Cairo, and the British government acted with commendable promptitude. Units of the army of occupation under orders to embark for home were ordered to stand fast, and Cromer was instructed to ascertain the policy of the Khedivial government [3] in face of this startling disaster. The Egyptian prime minister had already determined upon his. All garrisons were to withdraw to Khartoum, all outlying posts to be evacuated. They were orders that indicated little knowledge of the facts, and provoked Her Majesty's government into pressing withdrawal

[1] Sherif Pasha ridiculed the possibility of Hicks' defeat. To Cromer's anxieties he replied : "*Nous en causerons plus tard : d'abord nous allons donner une bonne raclée à ce Monsieur*" (the Mahdi).

[2] Lieut.-Colonel Stewart's report upon the Budget of the Sudan government in 1881 is instructive. The expenditure was estimated at £E.511,684, the revenue at £E.474,843. The pay of troops and the salaries of officials alone exceeded the revenue : there were no credits for roads, public works or schools. And singular entries on the expenditure side swelled the deficit. For example, in 1882, the Sudan paid for two governors-general, as well as a minister in Cairo.

[3] *Egypt No. 1, 1884.*

from the Sudan, while there was yet time. Short of despatching heavy reinforcements to Khartoum, there was indeed no other alternative. The Mahdi could march upon that town when he pleased, the fate of its garrison lay in his hands. But Sherif Pasha would not give way. If Great Britain denied her assistance at this juncture, he asserted that Egypt herself would reconquer the Sudan. To that vain declaration, the British government condescended no reply, and Sherif turned to Turkey. The appeal met with no practical response, and the Egyptian prime minister was now at the end of his resources. But Mr. Gladstone also had lost patience, and he confronted Sherif with an ultimatum : either the Egyptian prime minister must evacuate the Sudan at once, or give way to another, who would. Sherif chose the second alternative, and Egypt lost a valuable public servant. His honour was never called into question, nor his patriotism challenged. He had his failings as well as his virtues. A disinclination to face facts impaired the value of his judgment, a contempt for democratic ideals made him a dangerous adviser. Yet he deserves to be remembered by posterity, since he gave up place on account of conviction. If his rejection of Great Britain's advice was impolitic, it was at least inspired by a sense of patriotism. No Egyptian knew better than Sherif that his country could find neither men nor money for a campaign in the Sudan.

The Khedive could not immediately find a successor to Sherif. Riaz, minister of interior, had followed his chief into retirement ; other ministers spoke of pursuing the example. Cromer was indifferent whether they stayed or went : Lord Granville's confidential despatch of the 4th January provided him with an alternative.[1] He had no occasion to make use of it. Nubar Pasha [2] stepped into the

[1] That Egyptian ministers must follow in all important matters the advice of the British government, or forfeit their offices. In the last resort, Lord Cromer was authorized to appoint a cabinet of Englishmen. See page 382, *Modern Egypt*, Vol. I.

[2] Nubar Pasha, Armenian by race, born in Smyrna in 1825, came to Egypt when still a boy at the invitation of his uncle, Boghos Bey, the favourite counsellor of Mohammed Ali. He soon made a mark. He was private secretary to Ibrahim Pasha, and later represented Egypt at the court of Vienna. Ismail recalled him to

breach, and saved his country from government through a cabinet of Englishmen. That indignity would have sealed Egyptian aspirations for ever. Annexation would surely have followed, and Egypt been merged in the British empire. But Nubar's courage and foresight were not then recognized, and Egyptians spoke of him as the betrayer of their country. It was a judgment that did little credit to their good sense : he had served his country better than Sherif. When public opinion applauded the other's refusal to withdraw from the Sudan, it did not stop to ask how the prime minister proposed to re-establish his authority over it, nor did it inquire how this vast territory had been lost in the course of a few months. The Egyptian people, in short, knew nothing of the Sudan or of its conditions. Few individuals had visited Khartoum : none had gone there from choice. Nor can it be said that Nubar took office at a promising moment. The economic situation in the winter of 1883–84 was no more satisfactory than the political. A dark pessimism pervaded business and agricultural circles. There had been a heavy fall in the prices of all produce, and trade was reacting to it. The cotton, sugar and cereal markets were terribly depressed,[1] and the land tax was in arrear. Sir Edgar Vincent,[2] the financial adviser, painted the present and the future with a gloomy brush. "Twice," he wrote in his report of the year 1884, "the Egyptian Treasury was within £5,000 of suspending payment."

Lord Cromer, unmoved by Egyptian opinion, pressed the new ministry to hasten the process of evacuation. Nubar was willing enough, but the operation was less easy to execute than to advise. It was agreed that Lupton in the Bahr el Ghazal and Emin in Equatoria must be left to their fate. There was no hope of relieving either. The Mahdi's forces were astride the White Nile, and pinning both men to their

Cairo, and made him minister of foreign affairs. His imagination was fertile and rich, his mind supple and quick, and he will be always remembered in Egypt for his creation of the mixed tribunals.

[1] Report by F. C. Clarke in *Egypt No. 1, 1888*. There was a fall of 16 per cent. in the price of cotton, 32 per cent. in sugar, and of 6 per cent. in cereals.

[2] Sir Edgar Vincent, successor of Sir Auckland Colvin. Vincent became financial adviser in November, 1883, at the early age of twenty-six.

base. There thus remained only the Egyptian troops and population [1] of Khartoum to be considered. In theory their withdrawal was no very difficult feat. Following the defeat of Hicks, the Mahdi had returned to El Obeid to repose after the fatigues of the campaign. He was unlikely to undertake the siege of Khartoum for some weeks, or interfere with the process of evacuation. But in practice the operation was one of some complexity. Many hundreds of miles would have to be covered, before the retiring column reached a point of assured safety. The line of retreat was unfavourable to rapid progress. It lay by desert or by river or by a combination of both. Shipping and transport had to be collected, supply trains to be organized, depôts to be established and itineraries to be devised. Nor was it possible to predict the attitude of the inhabitants of Berber and Dongola provinces through which the convoys would pass. So far as was known, the agents of the Mahdi had not succeeded in disturbing their loyalty : but that good fortune was unlikely to continue, once Khartoum was evacuated. In their own interests the Arabs of Berber and Dongola might then throw in their lot with the enemy. Even less certain was the safety of the Berber-Suakin road. Throughout the autumn, the Mahdi's forces, led by Osman Digna, had been feinting and fighting before Tokar and Sinkat. Twice the governor of Suakin had endeavoured to relieve these outposts, twice he had met with failure. There was even reason, as early as November, to believe that no caravan of any size could safely use this road. And once the column was concentrated at Berber, its commander must decide whether to continue his march by the Nile, or strike east to Suakin. Neither route was very practicable for convoys encumbered with women and children. A steamer or two wrecked in the cataracts might bring retirement to a standstill, or unforeseen mortality among the transport camels, force the refugees to halt midway in the desert. It was plain, in short, that only a cool and resolute leader could conduct this business to a successful end. There was no such individual then in Khartoum. Complete confusion in fact existed

[1] No precise estimate of their number could be formed : an excellent illustration of the confusion that existed in Khartoum. It was probably between 10,000 and 20,000 souls.

there. Ala Din Pasha, the governor-general, had fallen by the side of Hicks, and his mantle descended upon a timid and incapable successor. The garrison was no better off. Its commander, an Englishman, physically and mentally ill, telegraphed rash and misleading messages to Cairo. He recommended instant evacuation, but he omitted to advise how the operation should be carried out. It was left to Her Majesty's government to step into the breach, and on the 1st December they offered the services of General Gordon. The suggestion found no favour either with Sherif or with Cromer. The first wanted from Great Britain troops, not advice upon the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrison, and the second frankly questioned the wisdom of employing a Christian. Cromer's argument was not particularly impressive. This Arab rising originally had little to do with points of doctrine: misgovernment and the suppression of the slave trade were rather its parents. It was equally improbable that the population of Khartoum would inquire into the religious faith of a leader who undertook to conduct them to safety: people menaced with captivity or death seldom concern themselves with the means of deliverance which fortune offers. But the excuse might have passed muster, if Sherif and Baring had laid their hands upon a competent Moslem officer, and sent him forthwith to Khartoum. No such decision was taken until six weeks later, when Nubar offered the supreme command to Abdel Qadir Pasha, a former governor-general. He was a brave and resolute officer, but he hesitated to accept the post. He had been recalled once for daring to speak the truth about the Sudan, he was reluctant to expose himself again to rebuff. Meanwhile Her Majesty's government were bringing pressure upon Cromer, and on the 16th January the latter gave way on the understanding that Gordon would be under his orders. Two days afterwards Gordon left London for Cairo.

Lord Cromer never ceased to regret his weakness. In his heart he mistrusted a man who relied upon inspiration for guidance, who substituted decision for reflection, and he remained convinced to the end that Gordon did not appreciate the difficulty of his mission. The conjecture is not improbable. Gordon was the last person in the world to speculate upon the chances of success and failure: he was

throughout his life supremely indifferent to both. And if he misjudged the situation, he was not the only Englishman of the period who did so. Cromer himself hardly recognized its gravity until too late. He learnt of the fate of Hicks on the 22nd November : yet he forbore to press advice at once upon the Khedive. In his own words, he wished " to give the Egyptian government time in order to see whether they would be able to devise any practicable policy of their own." [1] It was no doubt an interesting subject of speculation, but Cromer was unwise to indulge it. He spent his days unprofitably in endeavouring to persuade Sherif and his colleagues into evacuating the Sudan of their own will : he would have employed the time better in preparing plans of withdrawal. Half a dozen British staff officers would have made short work of the task, and if Cromer thought General Gordon unsuitable he had others to choose from. There could have been no serious danger to a military mission in Khartoum in the closing weeks of the year 1883, or impediment to its work. The Mahdi was many miles away, the people of Khartoum would have received the officers with open arms. Thus on the signal from Cairo, evacuation would proceed according to plan, and the column be transported smoothly at least as far as Berber. But nothing was done either in Cairo or in Khartoum : the political absorbed the military side of the problem. It was not until the close of December that the Khedivial government bethought themselves of keeping open the Suakin-Berber road. Then, and only then, was Valentine Baker sent to Suakin. He was given a command possibly adequate in the autumn, altogether insufficient a couple of months later. The overthrow of Hicks had rallied the tribes to the Mahdi's cause, and Osman Digna was master of the eastern Sudan.

Gordon's short stay in Cairo increased Lord Cromer's uncertainty, and the reports of their conversations leave on the mind of the reader a mournful impression of misunderstanding and suspicion. Gordon's flashes of inspiration awoke no response in Cromer, and the two men parted on doubtful terms. He travelled post-haste to the Sudan. The story of his journey, of his defiance of the Mahdi, of his ultimate isolation and tragic death, is narrated in a succeed-

[1] Page 375, Vol. I, *Modern Egypt.*

ing chapter : it is necessary here only to note that throughout the anxious months that followed, Cromer, burying his prejudice, loyally supported every appeal from the absent man. In later years he questioned not only the suitability of Gordon but the wisdom of sending any British officer to the Sudan.[1] It is difficult to follow his reasoning. It was the government of the Queen, not of the Khedive, that insisted upon withdrawal ; and if the second could not or would not attempt the operation, the task obviously devolved upon the first. There was really no other course. Having imposed their will upon Egypt in the matter, the British government had contracted certain obligations. The safety of Egyptians remaining in the Sudan was clearly one : England could not in honour leave these victims of her policy to the mercy of a savage and relentless enemy. If Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues deserve reproach, their sin lies in the exaggerated deference they paid to the counsel and wishes of Lord Cromer. They should have overruled his objections at once. No doubt Gordon's mission, as Cromer claimed, did involve Great Britain later in a costly campaign : but that contingency was unsuspected in 1883, and the misfortune might never have come to pass if Cromer himself had kept to the limitations of Her Majesty's government.[2] He thought fit to go beyond them, he authorized Gordon not only to promise autonomous government in the Sudan, but to retain the garrison so long as he thought their presence necessary on that account.[3] It was an error of judgment, a confusion of ideas. Outside the narrow limits of Khartoum no form of organized government was then possible in the Sudan. An ignorant and fanatical Arab held the reins of power in his own hand.

The departure of Gordon left Lord Cromer free to investigate the domestic difficulties of Egypt. The outlook was none too brilliant. The law of liquidation that had so narrowly averted financial disaster in 1880, now stood in the way of reconstruction. Its provisions had never taken into account the future needs of Egypt for capital, nor foreseen

[1] Page 428, *Modern Egypt.*

[2] Lord Granville's instructions dated 18th January, 1884. In brief they limited General Gordon to the simple business of evacuation.

[3] Page 445, *Modern Egypt.*

the inroads that disorder and insurrection would make upon her resources. Deficit had succeeded deficit,[1] and the financial adviser estimated early in 1884 that £9,000,000 was required to set the country on its feet. It was a sum too large to raise out of revenue, and Cromer boldly proposed a loan. The suggestion did not meet with unanimous approval. Egypt was in no position to hypothecate further her revenue, and investors would certainly require substantial guarantee before taking up the new stock. Cromer had his answer to this objection. He was confident of Egypt's capacity to pay, if Great Britain, either singly or conjointly with other Powers, would lend her name to the security. He finally persuaded the cabinet to his view and they sounded France upon the point. The government of the Republic at that moment were disposed to be good-humoured: they neither denied Egypt's distress nor challenged her need for a loan. But they asked as a price for their support, first, that Great Britain should define the duration of the occupation, and, secondly, join Europe in guaranteeing the neutrality of the Suez Canal. Both ends were dear to the French heart. Lord Granville, not to be outdone in courtesy, also laid his cards face upwards on the table. He promised British support in the matter of the Suez Canal, and he offered to terminate the occupation in 1888 on the understanding that Europe approved of the step. In return he required a reduction of half a per cent. on the rate of interest of existing Egyptian consolidated stock. They were handsome concessions, and the French government were inclined to negotiate on their basis. But as in 1882 so in 1884, they dared not commit the country without consulting their supporters. Public opinion was none too

[1] Deficit in the Budget,

	£E.
1881	161,000
1882	850,000
1883	1,635,000
1884	512,000
Indemnities of Alexandria	3,950,000
Cost of withdrawing from the Sudan	1,000,000
	£E.8,108,000

(Despatch of Lord Granville to the French Foreign Office, 4th April, 1884.)

favourable, and Ferry, the prime minister, drew back. He refused to modify existing rates of interest, he declined to subscribe to reserves upon the period of the occupation.[1] His obstinacy was a little difficult to understand in view of French ambition to neutralize the Suez Canal. Hitherto Great Britain had blocked the way, protesting that the Khedive and the Khedive's allies were its legitimate protectors. It was an argument that did not commend itself to the French mind. Great Britain was clearly the ally indicated, and no Frenchman was prepared to place his national interests under her protection. The British cabinet did not reason further. So breaking off conversation, they summoned the Powers to a conference in London.[2] Deliberation came to nothing. France wished to discuss the occupation, Great Britain refused to do so. The dispute split the Powers into two camps, and the delegates adjourned without taking decision. But the conference had not sat entirely in vain. While ministers and diplomats discussed high politics, the lesser fry were endeavouring to maintain the principles of the law of liquidation, and yet reconcile Egyptian administrative expenditure with income. It was clear in existing circumstances that the latter did not suffice. A curious situation had arisen. On the one hand the commissioner of public debt was amortizing that debt out of surpluses, on the other the Egyptian government were piling up a floating debt.[3] To this paradox rigid insistence on the

[1] France demanded unconditional withdrawal, and insisted that creditors had already made sufficient sacrifice. See page 327, *La Question d'Egypte*, by de Freycinet.

[2] The Powers nominated their Ambassadors in London and the commissioners of the Egyptian public debt as members of the conference, while Egypt delegated Blum Pasha, Sir Gerald Fitzgerald and Victor Harari Bey to represent her interests. Ismail Pasha, the ex-Khedive, thought the moment opportune to press his claims to the throne, and came to London for the purpose. But his promises of reform inspired no confidence, and Ismail returned empty-handed to Constantinople.

[3] In 1883 the Commission bought £800,000 of stock, while the administrative revenue fell short of expenditure by £1,600,000. Milner adds (page 184, *England in Egypt*), "It was clearly ruinous to pay off a funded debt bearing only 4 or 5 per cent. interest, if while so doing the government was obliged to borrow on short loans at a much higher rate of interest."

letter of the law of liquidation had reduced Egypt. The law had divided revenue into two parts, one allocated to current expenses of government, the other to charges of the public debt. To the second were assigned the more stable receipts, to the first the more uncertain sources of revenue. It was a convenient arrangement for the bondholder, but less so for Egypt, which enjoyed no benefit from any balance of revenue assigned to the commission of the public debt. Her government claimed now a share of the surpluses, and the law was amended to that effect.[1] Half of these surpluses over and above the sums required for payment of interest on the debt thenceforth passed automatically to the ministry of finance. On the other hand, Egypt undertook to confine her administrative expenditure to a fixed sum,[2] on the understanding that out of its reserve funds the commission would make up any deficiency. A still more substantial concession was made. The commissioners were empowered to employ their reserve upon capital expenditure in Egypt. But the money was theirs, to give or withhold as they thought fit, and more than one Power later made use of that reserve to the prejudice of Egypt.

Mr. Gladstone was profoundly mortified at the breakdown of the conference. He had confidently expected its members to provide him with an honourable escape from Egypt, and he became more than ever perplexed and uncertain of his course. In despair he fell back upon the time-honoured manœuvre of seeking further information upon the condition of Egypt. It was quite unnecessary. The facts were well known, and fresh inquiry was unlikely to throw fresh light upon a subject already exhaustively examined. Dufferin, Cromer and other Englishmen had already said all there was to say about Egypt: there was nothing left for a late-comer. It was almost a misfortune: for certainly Lord Northbrook, the agent chosen by Mr. Gladstone, was eminently qualified for the task of investigation. The problems of government and finance had no mystery for a man who had been a cabinet minister, a viceroy and a banker. Northbrook could only

[1] Incorporated in the convention of London the following year.

[2] £4,300,000. Handsome additions were subsequently made to this figure.

confirm the beliefs of his predecessors.[1] His report was disappointing. He was too cautious to pronounce judgment upon the burning question of the occupation : he would not discuss its necessity, much less suggest a date when it could be ended. Nor had he anything fresh to say of the financial problem. His remedies were the same as the remedies advocated by other people. He called for a reduction in the land tax, he counselled extension of irrigation works, he criticized the absurdity of an international administration supported by a British occupation, and he advised that Great Britain herself should guarantee a loan of £9,000,000. Mr. Gladstone would have done well to carry out the final recommendation without further ado. France might have protested, and Turkey made her customary reserves. But their opposition would have died, and Her Majesty's government been spared future embarrassment.

Mr. Gladstone's conscience had never ceased to prick him upon the subject of Egypt : he had made promises that he could not redeem, and the failure troubled his soul. He was reluctant, therefore, to provide his adversaries with further cause for attack, and he feared lest Europe should misconstrue a pledge of British credit. Meanwhile the sands of time were running out. Cromer was repeating his gloomy warnings, and hastily the prime minister recalled the representatives of the Powers to London. A healthier tone inspired discussion in the conference : France, sobered by the hint that no indemnities on account of loss of French life and property in Alexandria during the disturbances of the summer of 1882 would be paid unless Egypt obtained a loan, modified her attitude. Thus came about on the 18th March, 1885, the convention of London, which authorized the Khedivial government to borrow £9,000,000 under the guarantee of Europe, and to apply the sum, first in compensation to the victims of Alexandria, secondly in discharging the accumulations of the floating debt, and lastly in providing

[1] " His mission was a failure." With these curt words (page 371, Vol. II, *Modern Egypt*) Lord Cromer abruptly dismisses it. It was hardly a fair verdict. Lord Northbrook certainly failed in the sense that the government gleaned neither comfort nor counsel from the political half of his report : but his review of Cromer's financial troubles undoubtedly convinced the cabinet of the need for action.

funds for urgent public works. This convention began a fresh page of the history of Egypt. Its financial provisions started her on the road to prosperity, its ratification indirectly acknowledged her subordination to Great Britain.[1]

Mr. Gladstone's connection with Egypt terminated at this point. It had been an embarrassing and distasteful episode. Despite his antipathy to all military adventure, he had been led into the occupation of a country for whose ruler and people he professed friendly regard: despite his sincere desire to withdraw, he had been forced to stay. Almost it seemed as if fate had conspired against him. He was hampered in every quarter. There was first the unwelcome knowledge that restoration of order in Egypt implied reconstruction of government, next there was disaster in the Sudan, and lastly the sinister threat of bankruptcy. Such were some of the misfortunes which had descended upon Mr. Gladstone. The day of reckoning was at hand. Parliament was nearing its end, and odds were none too favourable for the Liberal party. Its leaders could claim no kind of success. Coercion had thrown Ireland into greater confusion, the occupation of Egypt had brought about in the winter of 1884–85 a costly and ineffective campaign in the Sudan. It was a disappointing conclusion to five years of office, and the electorate marked their dissatisfaction by returning the Conservatives to power. Lord Salisbury took up the reins of office. Leisurely he reached the conclusion that Turkey, the suzerain power, must share the burden of maintaining order in Egypt. He had never been enamoured with the occupation; he saw in it neither profit nor reputation to his country, and perceived the probability of it provoking estrangement with France. The course of history had justified these doubts, and Lord Salisbury was determined to call a halt. It was a decision reasonable enough from his point of view, and he resolved to transfer responsibility for Egypt from British to Turkish hands.

[1] The Porte made the following reserve: first, the Sultan of Turkey shall have full right to take the necessary measures for the defence of Egypt, whether against a belligerent State, or in Egypt itself in case of internal disorders; and, secondly, that Turkey should be represented on the commission of public debt. The conference registered the protest, but Great Britain paid no attention to it.

He was less concerned with the fate of Egypt, than with the need of relieving England from a disagreeable task. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff was his agent, and to him Lord Salisbury communicated his instructions. The appointment excited some misgivings in diplomatic circles, where Wolff was only known as a member of a group that had goaded Mr. Gladstone into madness during his term of office. Led by that erratic but brilliant personality Lord Randolph Churchill, Wolff, Balfour and others had heckled and worried the leader of the House at every turn. Mr. Gladstone's early hesitations about Egypt provided plenty of opportunity for attack, and the Fourth party roundly declared that the Khedive Tewfik had promoted disturbance in Alexandria in 1882. It was a charge, supported by no particle of evidence, and sober-minded people dismissed it as a perversion of facts. But it served the party's ends, and made the task of Malet in Egypt the harder. Wolff was to pay for the indiscretion. The Khedive had not forgotten the affront, and withheld assistance to Lord Salisbury's envoy. France also pricked up her ears, when rumour of Wolff's mission escaped, and she pleaded for the revival of the dual control.[1] It was an appeal that had been rejected again and again, and Lord Salisbury ignored the hint. The dual control had been tried and found wanting. It possessed the defects but none of the virtues of an occupation by a single Power, and much as Her Majesty's government desired the friendship of France, they could not afford to purchase the privilege at that price.

So Drummond Wolff, unhampered by engagements, went off to Constantinople. His instructions were simple enough : he was to persuade the Ottoman government to co-operate with England in Egypt. It is improbable that Lord Salisbury contemplated more at this stage, nor was Wolff commissioned to determine the respective duties of Great Britain and Turkey in the partnership. His vigour and pertinacity startled the Turks out of their customary procrastination. Conditions, no doubt, favoured the Englishman's suit. War was threatening in the Balkans, and its princelings and peoples were arming for struggle. Bulgaria was bursting with excitement : Greece and Serbia were sending round the

[1] Despatch of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the acting ambassador in Paris, dated 7th August, 1885.

fiery cross. It was no moment to affront England by refusing her friendly overtures on the subject of Egypt, and within two months after his arrival in Constantinople, the Sultan had agreed to the despatch of an Anglo-Turkish commission. The terms of reference embraced every issue that the ingenious mind of Wolff could suggest. They included the re-organization of the army, a review of the machinery of the Egyptian government, the measures required to restore the Khedive's authority over the abandoned Sudan, and the procedure that would terminate the British occupation within a reasonable period of time. It was something of a triumph for Wolff to have secured the appointment of any commission, and he hurried off in high spirits to Cairo. Mukhtar Pasha, the Turkish member of the commission, followed more leisurely. Mukhtar had spent long and honourable years in the service of the Sultan. He had fought in all corners of the Empire. His first service was in Arabia, his next in Bosnia, his last in the Caucasus. There, during the Russian struggle in 1877, he had won distinction through his obstinate defence of Kars. No more brilliant feat of arms than this adorns the pages of Turkish history. But Mukhtar's genius was less apparent in matters of policy, and his programme of an army of Egyptian conscripts, trained on Turkish lines, and officered by Turks, did not commend itself to the cooler judgment of his British colleague. It was an experiment that had been made before in Egypt, and mutiny had followed. Partiality for officers of Turkish and Circassian blood had nearly cost Tewfik the throne : but Mukhtar, accustomed to reduce all military problems to the common denominator of efficiency, ignored that lesson. He had observed the fellah officer at work, and formed a poor opinion of his merits ; he condemned also the employment of British officers in the army upon the inadequate ground of their religious belief. It was not very intelligent reasoning. Doctrine has nothing to do with efficiency, nor are British officers accustomed to impose their particular views on the rank and file. And Mukhtar's proposal to increase the strength of the army from 6,000 to 17,000 men alarmed Wolff still further. An impoverished country like Egypt could not afford to treble her army with a stroke of the pen. But ways and means seldom troubled

Mukhtar. He gave his opinions with military frankness. He described the abandonment of the Sudan as a painful and humiliating memory, that Egypt must wipe out at the point of the sword. He examined the probable cost of such a campaign, and pronouncing it to be within the capacity of Egypt to bear, he proposed an immediate advance into Dongola. That adventure found no support in British quarters. Apart from the difficulty of financing military operations in the Sudan,[1] it seemed that Mukhtar Pasha seriously underestimated the fighting power of the rebels : other soldiers, no less competent to express an opinion upon the point, rated it much higher. However indisciplined and untrained the levies of the Khalifa were, their superiority in numbers and in mobility made them a formidable foe. The occupation of Dongola was unlikely to be an agreeable military promenade. Wad en Nejumi, a valorous Arab, was in command of that province, and so far from dreading attack, he was then contemplating the invasion of Egypt.

Ten months sped by in barren conversation, until even Mukhtar lost heart. The opposition of Great Britain was not the only obstacle that he encountered. The Sultan was indisposed to lend the services of his officers to the Egyptian Army, or permit the Khedivial government to recruit the rank and file from Imperial territory. Turkey in fact at this moment needed all her resources nearer home. Wolff had spent the time perhaps more profitably than his colleague. He had conducted an exhaustive inquiry into the administration, and had exposed abuses unremarked by preceding investigators. The defects of existing judicial procedure were one ; the embarrassments of the capitulations, a second. His study would have been more effective had the Khedive sympathized with it, and Lord Salisbury recalled him to London. His stay there was brief : within a few weeks he was again in Constantinople, armed with more explicit instructions. Great Britain was now prepared to withdraw from Egypt on two conditions : first, that she preserved the right of re-occupation in the event of internal disorder or threat to territorial integrity ; and, secondly,

[1] It was part of Mukhtar's programme that Great Britain should sacrifice for this purpose the £200,000 a year paid by Egypt as her contribution towards the cost of the army of occupation.

that she maintained her existing control over the army.[1] Behind the proposal there loomed a projected neutralization of Egypt. It was a programme that made no appeal to the Sultan, anxious to strengthen rather than surrender suzerain rights, and he counterstruck by inviting Great Britain to define her intentions upon the subject of evacuation. Lord Salisbury could not undertake to do so : but he made concessions, and on the 22nd May, 1887, he agreed to a convention, that bound Great Britain to withdraw her troops within three years, and to relinquish her control over the Egyptian army within five years, while Turkey in turn acknowledged the right of the other to re-occupy Egypt, if circumstances required that step. Who was to decide the nature of these circumstances was left undetermined. The omission mattered little. The convention was never ratified ; France and Russia barred the way.

France angrily proclaimed that evacuation must be final, that the right of re-occupation must be denied. Russia echoed the cry, and bewildered by remonstrance from the two Powers, the Sultan withheld his signature.[2] In vain Wolff put forth all his powers of persuasion : the Sultan kept him dawdling in Constantinople on one empty excuse or another. It was the traditional policy of the Turk, uncertain of his own interest, timid of provoking remonstrances from his neighbours. But on this occasion the manœuvre failed. Lord Salisbury was no man to accept rebuff, or admit a slight. His patience was exhausted, and his good nature at its end. The situation had become intolerable. Queen Victoria had already signed the convention, and the prime minister fixed the 15th July as the date when the Sultan must follow Her Majesty's example, or accept the consequences of his neglect. The day passed without sign, and on the morrow Wolff left Constantinople. At once the Ottoman government desired their representative in London to re-open negotiations. It was too late. Lord Salisbury had no confidence in eleventh-hour repentancy. He had made his decision : it was irrevocable. Thus did the jealousy of France wreck negotiation in Constantinople, as it

[1] Memorandum of Sir H. D. Wolff addressed to the Ottoman government, 8th February, 1887.

[2] See page 124, *England in Egypt.*

had wrecked negotiation three years earlier in London. It was a costly triumph for French diplomacy. But throughout these months a noisy press had striven to estrange the two Powers, and France had fallen into the trap. It was a political group, rather than the government, who were responsible for the mischief. The despatches of the French Foreign office during this period indicate no ill-will towards Great Britain, and the two governments might have come to terms but for the intervention of irresponsible writers. Influenced by their bellicose tone, members of the chamber of deputies lost their calm, and cried out upon the leaders. The rhetoric and clamour were beside the mark : the occupation had only accomplished what France and England in earlier years had set out to do, together. But France chose to ignore the moral, and the British press now took up the quarrel, hinting that Egypt must become part of the British empire. It was a depressing spectacle for men who desired a better understanding between the two countries : but the fault was not wholly that of France. Great Britain's early uncertainties had contributed to embitter feeling. At one moment her government spoke of withdrawing from Egypt : at the next they announced their intention to remain, until reconstruction was completed.

The Wolff mission was the last of its kind, and the presence of England in Egypt remained uncontested until thirty years later, when Egyptians challenged its justice. France meanwhile had come to terms with England, and Turkey, preoccupied with domestic difficulties, had sunk into gloomy silence. There had been protests in the intervening years. France, for example, seized upon the Marchand episode to denounce the occupation, and Turkey took umbrage over a boundary dispute in southern Sinai. But in each instance the protest ended in words, and it was not until the outbreak of the Great War that Turkey made a bid to recover her lost province. It was then too late. France and England had composed their differences, and stood side by side.

Meanwhile the Khedivial government were planning how to spend to the best advantage the £1,000,000 that the convention of London had allocated to capital expenditure in Egypt. They did not lack advice : counsel and suggestion came from every quarter. There was no ministry that did

not plead for a share of this windfall, there was no department that did not protest its incapacity to make bricks without straw. To these entreaties, the government paid no heed. Primed by Cromer, they were resolved to devote every piastre of the loan to remunerative work. It was not difficult in these circumstances to guess where the bulk of the money would go. Egypt's prosperity springs from intensive agriculture, which in turn depends upon perennial irrigation. The irrigation service was in a deplorable state : it could neither provide the cultivator with sufficient water, nor assure the supply reaching him at the proper moment. Scott Moncrieff, a name still honoured in Egypt, put an end to the confusion, and inspired the service with his own ideals. This remarkable and far-sighted Scotsman had already laid his plans. The repair or reconstruction of the barrage at the apex of the Delta would swallow two-thirds of the million at Egypt's disposal, the construction of fresh canals and drains would account for the balance. That perennial irrigation requires first the storage of water, and secondly provision for distributing the supply, is a self-evident proposition : unhappily for the Egyptian cultivator, his government at this period furnished him with neither. The barrage, in short, had not fulfilled the anticipation of the builder. It was an inspiration of Mohammed Ali. A few miles north of Cairo, the Nile divides, and at the point of bifurcation, Mohammed Ali in 1833 commissioned Mougel, a French engineer in his service, to build a barrage. Its design was original and imposing : but the foundations were poor, and signs of settlement soon apparent. Worse followed. The piers cracked, and menaced the stability of the superstructure. Designed to hold up fifteen feet of water, the most that it accomplished was a third of that height, and from 1867 even that modest record was not achieved : Scott Moncrieff therefore had no time to lose. The government in 1882–83 were seriously contemplating abandoning the barrage, and substituting for it the costly alternative of pumping.[1] It would have been a disaster for Egypt, and the cautious Scott Moncrieff hesitated to scrap a work which had cost nearly £2,000,000. Further reflection confirmed

[1] At an initial cost of £700,000 and an estimated annual outlay of £248,000.

his doubts of the need, and he commissioned Willcocks to put in hand temporary repairs. Willcocks, an engineer of ingenious and fertile ideas, succeeded so well that the barrage during the following summer actually held up a metre of water. It was an encouraging sign, and the government authorized reconstruction of the work. The convention of London furnished funds for the experiment.

Until Mohammed Ali introduced into Egypt the cultivation of cotton and sugar, the fellah relied upon basin irrigation. It was a provision of nature, that had satisfied him from time immemorial. He raised a single crop a year, and he was satisfied with that modest achievement. His neighbours in the Euphrates Valley had possessed at one time in history wider vision. They had marked the potentialities of perennial irrigation, and experimented boldly with them. But perennial, unlike basin irrigation,[1] requires perpetual attention, and in the confusion that overtook his empire, the Chaldean cultivator forgot this elementary principle. He neglected his duty of clearing canals and drains of silt, and he watched without concern the gradual deterioration of the soil. Retribution, painful and dramatic, followed. The land became a salted plain, and the prosperity of its inhabitants departed. The strong hand of Mohammed Ali saved the Delta of Egypt from a similar calamity : but its people paid a heavy price for the immunity. They were doubly taxed, first in money, and secondly in labour. To bring water during the summer into the fields, and later to drain it off, Mohammed Ali constructed deep and narrow canals and drains, making the fellahin responsible for their annual clearance. The corvée lay ready to his hand. No ruler of Egypt made greater use of it, no ruler employed forced labour more relentlessly. He summoned huge gangs of fellahin without a thought of the consequences their absence from the fields would entail. He impressed 300,000 labourers on the construction of a canal giving the town of Alexandria direct access to the Nile, and out of that army 20,000 are reported to have died from hunger and privation.[2] No doubt the corvée, like the kourbash, is of respectable antiquity, and Mohammed Ali, in his use of

[1] Land watered by Nile flood once a year.

[2] Page 126, *Egypt in the Nineteenth Century*, by Cameron.

both, followed tradition.[1] He was the master of Egypt, and he thought her labour a legitimate prerogative to the throne. Said shared the same belief, and even stretched it in favour of de Lesseps. That astute Frenchman had the viceroy's ear, and the good-humoured Said signed away the thews and sinews of the fellah with little compunction. Under Ismail the corvée was tightened. As agriculture developed in intensity, so did canals and drains multiply, until the labour of the population hardly sufficed for their maintenance. Seldom did the corvée in these and earlier years number less than 600,000 to 700,000 men.[2] The work was terribly laborious. The victims received neither payment nor food, they provided their own tools, and they slept on the bare ground.[3] Lord Cromer for once was at a loss : he could not persuade public opinion to condemn the corvée, or recognize its evil consequences to agriculture. Yet they were obvious enough to an intelligent eye. The clearance of water channels synchronizes with the season of hoeing and weeding, and the fellah, on his release, was too exhausted to perform these duties. Nor was this the only black spot : omdas and sheikhs of villages habitually diverted part of the labour to their own profit. Scott Moncrieff saw the evil, and permitted the fellah to ransom himself with a fine. It was not an ideal device, but the expedient would have

[1] The Arabs impressed labour remorselessly. See page 347, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt*, by Butler.

[2] See a report dated 20th January, 1886, by Scott Moncrieff (*Egypt No. 4, 1886*).

[3] Willcocks' own experience in 1883 is instructive. He had before him on one occasion " a deep trench 25 metres wide, 15 metres deep to the tops of the banks, out of which 3 metres in depth of slush and mud were being removed by a gang of 3,500 naked labourers. Some were standing knee-deep in the slush, out of which they were grubbing up double handfuls of the stuff, and putting the chunks of mud on the bare backs of others who supported the wet, cold and slimy stuff, with their arms folded behind their backs, walked up the slopes, and threw it over the reverse side. At every ten metres or so on either bank stood a man with a long thin cane, which he used on the bare backs of the corvée. . . . The very difficult removal of the slush to so great a depth was costing 100 piastres per cubic metre. Dredgers subsequently did the work at 5 piastres per cubic metre." See page 21, *Egypt during the Forty Years of the British Occupation*, by Sir William Willcocks : *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Egypte*, VIII, 1926.

served, had Scott Moncrieff been able to enlist the assistance of all landowners. But he was unable to do so : they would neither release labour from their own fields, nor pay for substitutes.[1] Provincial authority dared not interfere. Profiting themselves from the corvée, pashas and beys saw no reason why it should not continue for ever. That dream was rudely broken. It depended upon the kourbash, and from the day that the Khedive forbade the use of the whip, the fellah obstinately defied authority. Matters came to a head in the autumn of 1885, when mudirs confessed their incapacity to provide the corvée except through the kourbash. It was painful news to Scott Moncrieff, torn between humanity and duty, but he did not dispute its truth.[2] He was himself at the end of his resources. Irrigation credits did not permit him to substitute paid for forced labour, nor was he able to reduce the numbers of the latter until the barrage was in working order.

Cromer was less thin-skinned. Injustice seldom stirred this dispassionate Englishman into impulsive action. He did not aspire to regenerate mankind, or to equalize its burdens : he recognized the imperfections of this world, and abode by them. Egypt was not England, nor were the beliefs and conventions of Europe suitable for transplantation in Africa. He did not defend the corvée, but he was uncertain of the wisdom of abolishing it at that particular moment. The burden no doubt lay heavily on the back of the fellahin : but its incidence was growing less every year,[3] and in his belief Egypt really could not afford to dispense with the corvée. Her administrative expenditure had been fixed at a

[1] Scott Moncrieff's report gives one illustration of the immunity enjoyed by the more powerful classes of the country. The province of Gharbia was one. That province contained large private and Wakf estates, whose owners took no notice of the corvée. They neither sent men, nor paid for substitutes.

[2] He wrote this : " The agricultural work of Egypt can no longer be maintained by unaided corvée labour." (His report, 20th January, 1886, *Egypt No. 4, 1886.*)

[3] In 1848, 634,000 men were summoned for undefined periods to the corvée. In 1882 the number had sunk to 376,000 (report by Scott Moncrieff dated 20th January, 1886, *Egypt No. 4, 1886*). In 1883, 202,650 men were called out for a period of 100 days ; in 1886 and 1887, 95,093 and 87,120 respectively (page 417, Vol. II, *Modern Egypt*).

figure that allowed no margin for luxuries, and before the sum was increased, the Powers must give their consent. But Scott Moncrieff's warning carried the day, and Cromer pondered how he could meet this fresh call. Lord Northbrook's report gave him an idea. In the course of his inquiry he had looked into the land tax, and had commented strongly upon it. It had been fixed by a commission that consulted only the convenience of the Khedive and that of his favourites, and Northbrook counselled a remission of £E.450,000. That recommendation had been accepted, and three-fourths of the sum Cromer now proposed to employ in substitution paid for forced labour. But unhappily Northbrook had been misinformed : the financial adviser was in a position to spare only £E.120,000. It was a bitter disappointment to Cromer and to Scott Moncrieff. Great Britain at once took up the matter, and invited the Powers to increase the administrative revenue of Egypt : but France would not agree, unless Great Britain accepted the control of all expenditure upon public works by the commission of the public debt. It was an impossible reserve. Egypt had suffered enough from internationalism, and rather than perpetuate that affliction, Cromer preferred the corvée. At this point the British cabinet came to his aid, and agreed to place at the disposal of the government the income of the British holding in the Suez Canal Company. The gift was not required. France came to terms, Egypt found the balance from her own resources, and five years later, in 1890, the corvée was formally and finally abolished.[1] History will record that fact as one of the noblest achievements of the occupation.

[1] It continued, as it continues to-day, to furnish an army of watchers over the banks of the Nile during flood-time. Except for this purpose, the corvée has never been called again, save in 1904, when it was summoned to repel a plague of locusts. The experiment was not successful. Only a handful of the population obeyed the call.

CHAPTER VII

PROSPERITY

The occupation was now entering a new phase. Out of the confusion of the past, order had arisen, and the Egyptian exchequer was reacting to the change. Revenue showed a welcome increase.[1] There was less need now to skimp and pare. Money had become available for the spending services : it was possible to abolish certain taxes,[2] and even create a reserve. All this was accomplished through intelligent control of the national finance. Every item of fresh expenditure underwent jealous scrutiny. No new appointments in the civil service were made without the sanction of an independent committee of the ministry of finance ; [3] no contracts were passed, until they had survived the ordeal of public tender. The condition of the administrative services was less satisfactory. The army and irrigation services had put their house in order : others, the ministries of justice and interior in particular, lagged painfully behind. Here and there an abuse more patent than its fellows had been swept away ; but much remained to be done. Public security hardly existed in the provinces, so incompetent were the tribunals and the police. Both services stood in need of drastic reconstruction, and Lord Cromer turned his mind to the task.

[1] From 1883 to 1886 aggregate budget deficits amounted to £2,762,000 ; from 1887 to 1893 aggregate surpluses to £3,999,000 (*Egypt No. 1 1898*).

[2] The professional tax, bringing in £180,000, was given up ; the salt tax was halved.

[3] This committee made a modest beginning in 1883, and a decree, dated 6th March, 1884, legalized its existence. Its utility was manifest from the first. Between 1880 and 1883 no less than 598 new posts were created in the civil service ; in the next three years the figure had sunk to 200 (see the financial adviser's report, *Egypt No. 36, 1888*).

It was a prodigious business. Egypt had never been remarkable for the expedition or purity of justice. Mohammed Ali's efforts to encourage both had not been particularly successful. The new tribunals were administrative rather than judicial, and the Bench lost their way in strange and unfamiliar duties. Adjournments were usual and protracted, unless the throne desired to make an example of an offender. Then trial would follow fast enough upon crime, and punishment, barbarous and often vicarious, no less swiftly upon trial. The inhabitants of a village suspected of harbouring a deserter from the army or an absentee from the corvée, were soundly whipped: their resistance and protest construed as treason. Sentences of five hundred strokes of the kourbash and perpetual banishment to the Sudan,[1] were not uncommon: penalties usually sufficient to strangle conspiracy at its birth. By such measures did Mohammed Ali and his successors reduce Egypt to a terrified and silent impotence. His imperfect judicial organization lasted until 1856, when the Porte introduced a series of judicial reforms that confined the jurisdiction of the Mekhemma Sharia, or religious tribunals, until then the sole fount of justice, to disputes connected with marriage, divorce, alimony and inheritance. New courts were created to deal with criminal and commercial suits, and Egypt as a province of the Ottoman empire dutifully separated her legal from religious business. It was a considerable advance, but the administration of justice in practice still remained defective. The procedure of the reformed courts inspired little confidence. The public were not usually admitted to hearings, counsel frequently forbidden to appear. Elementary rules of evidence were

[1] Fazogli, a distant outpost of the Sudan, became a state prison by order of Abbas I. It was a conception worthy of his morose and vindictive mind: few of the victims returned to tell the story of their confinement. Malaria and insufficient food took toll even of the strongest, and the weaker did not survive the journey. Colonel W. W. Loring, in *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1884), thus describes the passage of parties: "Numbers of rich and poor were confined together in the same party with a wooden yoke around their necks, and their hands manacled, and were marched great distances, their ankles chained in heavy fetters."

ignored, and justice was administered in haphazard fashion. Delays became more interminable than ever,[1] until Ismail, midway in his reign, determined to end the existing confusion. He called upon Nubar Pasha, the prime minister, to reform Egyptian justice.[2] No Egyptian knew better than Nubar the need for cleansing. He flung himself into the task with enthusiasm, and succeeded so far that in November, 1881, a new judicial organization, based upon French principles of jurisprudence, was promulgated. It remained a dead letter: the winter of 1881–82 was not propitious for administrative changes. Arabi was inciting the army to mutiny, and government was paralysed. Not until three years later was it possible to begin Nubar's experiment in justice. A court of appeal sitting in Cairo, and tribunals of first instance in provincial centres, administered the new law. But the tribunals and codes were hardly suited to a people accustomed to more primitive practices, and judgments given by the bench did not always correspond with national ideals of equity. Miscarriage of justice was notorious and frequent. More than one lawyer of repute, coming to the assistance of Egypt, floundered awhile in the mire of incompetence and corruption, and departed having accomplished nothing. Maxwell and West suffered that dismal experience, Le Grelle did not escape it. Not until Scott was appointed judicial adviser did matters take a turn for the better. Scott set to work to reform procedure, to purge the bench of ignorant and useless judges.

It was high time that a single authority took charge of the course of justice: for public security had gone from bad to worse. Brigands roamed the country, plundering and mal-

[1] Fathi Pasha Zaghlul, under Secretary of State for Justice, in his *Mohamma* (Cairo, 1906) gives many examples. It was apparently a common habit on the part of tribunals to adjourn criminal suits over periods of ten and even more years.

[2] Lord Cromer (page 515, Vol. II, *Modern Egypt*) wrote of justice as it existed as follows: "Prior to 1883 a system of punishment existed, or it would be perhaps more correct to say that a method was in force, by which occasionally somebody was punished for an offence which, as often as not, he had never committed, whilst not unfrequently others were punished without any offence at law having been committed at all. . . . The divorce between law such as it was and justice was absolute."

treating any Egyptian bold enough to resist their demands. The ministers closed their eyes to the melancholy facts, and Nubar Pasha would hear nothing to the discredit of the tribunals. His obstinacy was due less perhaps to belief in their virtue, than to the knowledge that reform of the type contemplated by Cromer meant elimination of Egyptian authority over justice. British control of finance, war and public works pointed the warning. But Nubar had not counted upon the spread of lawlessness. In Upper Egypt, to such depths had the administration of law descended, that no man could call life and property his own. In despair the prime minister nominated a number of semi-military commissions, and instructed their presidents to put an end to brigandage. The experiment ended in his own undoing: for the commissions set about their task with little respect for the principles of law or the rules of evidence. Through torture and false witness they secured convictions: but the innocent suffered with the guilty, and the breakdown of justice was complete.

That misfortune was not wholly due to the incompetence of the regular tribunals: it sprang in part from profound suspicion of evidence supplied by the police. The discipline and training of the provincial police was highly unsatisfactory. In the confusion that followed Arabi's adventure, the existing police force disappeared, and Lord Dufferin commissioned Colonel Valentine Baker [1] to create a substitute. The choice of Baker was unhappy. His experience was entirely military, and though Lord Dufferin was aiming at the establishment of a gendarmerie as well as a civil police, he could have found without much searching a better agent. Meanwhile taking advantage of Baker's absence at Suakin, Clifford Lloyd in Cairo studied the organization of the provincial police. His principle was new to Egypt. Having a profound distrust of all mudirs, he handed over control of the police to an independent inspectorate officered by Eng-

[1] Valentine Baker, having lost his commission in the British army, offered his sword to the Sultan of Turkey. From Constantinople, in the first days of the occupation, he hurried to Cairo, and was invited to re-create the Egyptian army. But Queen Victoria stepped in, and refused to permit officers on full pay to serve under Baker's command. He had offended her rigid ideals, and she would not pardon the offence.

lishmen.[1] It was a pernicious division of authority. The mudir was still responsible for public security in his province, but the instrument of maintaining order was now under the orders of another. The force itself also inspired neither respect nor confidence. Officers and men were recruited from the army, and they made no better policemen than soldiers. The miserable rates of pay did not keep body and soul together : to live, the rank and file were forced to steal. It is little wonder if the legal mind shrank from relying upon the testimony of such police, and it is no less surprising that Clifford Lloyd's organization lasted so long as it did. The end did not come until 1894, when a British adviser was appointed to the ministry of interior and the control of the police returned to the hands of the mudir.

Before the hollowness of the administration of justice was exposed, Nubar resigned. His relations with the British agency had been unfriendly for some time, and in the summer of 1887 he travelled to London expressly to complain of Lord Cromer. The journey was wasted, and Nubar returned empty-handed. He took his revenge in thwarting Cromer at every turn: every appointment and reform suggested by him became a field of acrimonious discussion. In these contests Nubar invariably came off the worst : his subtlety was no match for the other's directness of speech. Difference developed into rupture, when the prime minister proposed, on news of Valentine Baker's death, to abolish the police inspectorate. It was a reasonable proposal, if the government would take in hand the reform of justice. But there was no such expectation, and Cromer was determined to retain in British hands at least one guarantee of order. The Khedive Tewfik, drawn into the conflict, sided with his minister, and refused point-blank to appoint a successor to Baker. It was a perplexing situation, and reluctantly the British government intervened. Once before they had reminded Tewfik that their advice must be followed, and they sounded the warning again. The Khedive took the reproof

[1] See decree dated 31st December, 1883, dividing Egypt into three police circles, each in charge of a European inspector, who linked the mudir and the police officer. The same decree took the duty of investigating crimes out of the hands of the mudir and entrusted it to the police.

with good grace, and made his peace with Cromer. His own interests were at stake. His father Ismail was imploring England to allow him to return to Egypt, and Tewfik found it prudent in these circumstances to sacrifice Nubar. So the latter gave way to Riaz in the summer of 1888. Riaz had little in common with his predecessor. Finesse he despised, diplomacy he abhorred: in place he issued orders, and expected implicit obedience. But a hasty temperament and an arbitrary will multiplied the number of his enemies. He fell out with Lord Cromer, as he fell out sooner or later with all who crossed his path, over the appointment of Scott as judicial adviser. Riaz refused his consent, on the ground that the ministry of justice stood in no need of reform. It was an ill-chosen battle-ground, and the British government, out of patience, required him to acquiesce or resign. Riaz yielded. He had better have gone down fighting as Sherif had done: for the last traces of his prestige went with the surrender. Frowned on by every one, Riaz had to admit defeat, and in May, 1891, he resigned. Mustapha Pasha Fehmi filled the vacant place.

Mustapha Fehmi harboured no illusions on the subject of the occupation. He liked it no better than other of his fellow-countrymen, but knew of no way of ending it. Of that disagreeable conclusion, Mustapha Fehmi prepared to make the best. A storm of abuse descended on his head. The palace accused him of sacrificing Egyptian interests, and of cringing to the British agency. The charge was wholly untrue: Mustapha Fehmi was guilty of no greater crime than looking the facts in the face. His courage was soon put to the test. The Khedive Tewfik died,[1] and Abbas Hilmi, the elder son, succeeded. Little was known in Egypt of the young prince. He was being educated in Vienna,[2] and reports of his temper and character were not reassuring. He was spoken of as a petulant lad, impatient of advice and restraint. Later it transpired that his political education had been sadly neglected. Sycophants and flatterers paid him court and filled his youthful imagination with stories of

[1] 7th January, 1892.

[2] The British government had desired to have the boy educated under their own eyes: but the intention was abandoned, when France let it be known that she disapproved.

Ismail's greatness. Abbas greedily drank in the tale, ignorant of the changes that the British occupation had brought about in Egypt. He was soon to repair that omission.

In the beginning the young Khedive created a favourable impression. He asked intelligent questions, he commented sensibly upon the answers. But that promising start was not maintained, and Abbas Hilmi took occasion to complain of the prime minister's intercourse with the British agency. It was an attack really upon Cromer. A change of government had taken place in England, and a Liberal cabinet was again in power. The moment seemed favourable to strike at the British representative in Egypt. As far as Cromer was concerned, the plot failed. The Khedive had yet to learn that the Foreign Office holds to its course, irrespective of the political opinions of the party in power. Mustapha Fehmi had fallen ill, and Tigrane,[1] the evil genius of the palace, bestirred himself. He persuaded the Khedive to dismiss Mustapha Fehmi, and to replace him with Fakhri Pasha. Lord Cromer at once appealed to London, and the British government refused to sanction the change.[2] Cromer did not press his victory unduly. He reasoned with the Khedive, still only a boy in years ; he offered to sacrifice Mustapha Fehmi, provided His Highness in turn would announce his readiness to accept in future the advice of Her Majesty's government. Sulkily Abbas Hilmi gave way, dismissing Fakhri and naming Riaz in his place. It was an injudicious choice, for Riaz was more intemperate than ever. Once again he broke off relations with the agency, and dragged the palace into the dispute. The foreign communities of Cairo and Alexandria, with memories of 1882 still fresh in mind, took alarm, and the whisper passed that the Khedive was planning revolution. It was pure gossip.

[1] Tigrane was Nubar Pasha's nephew. Born in Armenia and educated in Paris, he had been admitted early in life into the service of the Khedive. With his uncle's backing and by his own wits, he ran quickly up the ladder of promotion, so that in 1883 he was already under 'Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Tigrane persuaded Sherif Pasha to refuse to withdraw from the Sudan. (See page 349, *Winnowed Memories*, by Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood. Cassell & Co., London, 1918.)

[2] See despatch, dated 16th January, 1892, reproduced textually in *Abbas II* (Macmillan, London, 1915), by Lord Cromer.

Tigrane possibly had endeavoured to work up public opinion, but Egypt had listened, and then gone about her customary business. But the unfriendly attitude of Riaz towards Englishmen in the civil service provoked Great Britain into action. The army of occupation was lightly reinforced with a couple of battalions, and the Foreign Secretary read a homily to the Khedive's government. The despatch was not encouraging reading for Abbas Hilmi and Riaz, who had staked their hopes upon the Liberal party, and they turned to Turkey for help. Abbas was persuaded to approach the Sultan, while Tigrane went round the embassies in Constantinople on a similar mission. The campaign was carefully stage-managed: companies of omdas and sheikhs from Egypt, armed with petitions addressed to the Chalif of Islam complaining of Christian rule in a Mohammedan country, marched through the streets of Constantinople. But their pains, and those of Tigrane, were wasted. The Sultan, sick of Egypt and of her Khedive, would lend neither spiritual nor temporal assistance. Still Riaz was not discomfited by the failure, and in the early winter of 1893–94, it was clear that trouble was maturing. The administration by England of the Egyptian army became the point of attack. This army had grown into a respectable force.[1] Its strength had increased from 6,000 to 12,000 rifles, and the number of British officers employed from 27 to 69. Early in January the Khedive left Cairo with the intention of reviewing the troops stationed on the frontier. At Wadi Halfa he commented caustically upon the bearing and discipline of the army. It was an indiscretion. The occasion was a ceremonial review, held in honour of the sovereign, and military etiquette customarily forbids criticism of it. But there was no one to advise him upon the point. Kitchener listened in silence to

[1] Lord Dufferin in 1883 fixed the establishment at eight infantry battalions, four batteries of artillery, and a camel corps: a sufficient force in his opinion to support the police and protect the frontier. Revolt in the Sudan led him to recommend the addition of a Turkish brigade to stiffen "the invertebrate ranks of the fellahin soldiery." The experiment was not a success. The first unit raised mutinied twice, and was finally disbanded as incorrigible and worthless. In place battalions of blacks were raised and the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th Sudanese incorporated in the army between the years 1884 and 1888. Kitchener became Sirdar in 1892.

the rebuke, and then tendered his resignation. But Her Majesty's government were not disposed to let the matter drop so easily. His Highness's opinion upon military matters was of no great importance : but Abbas on this occasion had gone further, and spoken disparagingly of British officers. Great Britain could not permit the affront to pass unnoticed, and the Khedive was required to publish an apology. Abbas sulkily gave way. He expressed his satisfaction with the drill of the army ; he thanked the Sirdar and his officers for their services.[1] It was a mortifying experience, and His Highness looked about for a victim of his wrath. His eye fell upon Riaz, who he suspected had baited the trap. There was no foundation for that belief : he was not the culprit. On the contrary, as soon as he learnt of the incident, he besought the Khedive to make peace with the English while there was yet time. Abbas, as obstinate as capricious, could not be persuaded of Riaz's innocence, and he insisted upon the minister's resignation. Nubar succeeded.

But Nubar was no more than the shadow of his old self : ill in mind, infirm of body, he quietly laid aside his old antagonism to Great Britain. Lord Cromer met him halfway. He also was in want of a truce to reconsider his views. The history of the previous months seemed to indicate a moral, if the reconstruction of Egypt was to be accomplished within a reasonable time, and he was meditating upon the expediency of entrusting Englishmen with wider responsibility of government. He had begun his consulship with a different ideal, with the fixed intention of watching Egypt undertake her own salvation under the guidance of the occupation. That experiment had failed after patient trial, and since the Khedive and the Khedive's ministers would not co-operate with England, there was nothing left in Cromer's judgment but to impose British advice upon both. The experiment had answered remarkably well in finance and justice : it was worth a trial in other departments of the State. The powers of the British adviser were never precisely defined. In theory he exercised no executive authority,[2] in practice

[1] Published in French and Arabic in the issue of the Official Journal dated the 26th January, 1894.

[2] Only the financial adviser sat in the council of ministers, and his claim to do so was not formally admitted until February, 1893.

he controlled all business. Each was supreme in his own circle. In the conflict of wills that followed, the minister invariably went to the wall. As a rule he bore the indignity with good humour though in fact he enjoyed no other choice. Protest was useless, as the adviser took his cue from the agency, and opposition terminated in the minister being called upon to resign. Thus fell to a handful of Englishmen the whole conduct of administration. It was a procedure that contributed no doubt to the welfare of Egypt, but none the less it deprived the sovereign and his ministers of authority over government. They had brought the misfortune upon themselves. Had they co-operated more closely with the occupation in the early years, there would have been less need for the British adviser. Nor did Lord Cromer introduce the expedient, until he was at the end of his resource. In each instance he awaited a legitimate excuse for action ; in each instance he made substantial concession to Egyptian prejudice. Thus the appointment of an adviser to the ministry of interior was preceded by the withdrawal of British inspectors of provincial police : that of an adviser to the department of education was followed by raising the department to the dignity of a ministry. None the less, a few reflective minds questioned the wisdom of divesting ministers of their responsibility for government. They did not dispute the power of an Englishman to hasten reconstruction, but they suspected that the measure would further widen the breach between the occupation and the Egyptian people. They were not indeed convinced of the need of imposing lofty standards of government in Egypt. She was a backward country, and her inhabitants would be suited with a modest administration. So long as Lord Cromer was at the helm, the ship of state would hold no doubt an even course, but succeeding pilots might be less successful. Nor was this the only objection. The experiment seemed hardly in harmony with the spirit of England's pledges to the world.

That decision relieved both parties from awkwardness. In the absence of the adviser, the council of ministers sometimes approved proposals, involving expenditure of which the first could not approve. He was then confronted by a choice of alternatives each equally unpleasant. Either he must offend the council by refusing the necessary credit, or he must condone expenditure, that he had no funds to meet.

Its practice entailed the displacement of Egyptians in the civil service.

But honest government was Cromer's simple panacea for the ills of the world, and upon Egypt he certainly bestowed the gift. He purified the services of the State, he set a limit to corruption, and he vindicated justice. Simultaneously he financed the construction of costly public works [1] and found money for a prolonged military campaign in the Sudan, without adding to the national debt or increasing taxation. The physical welfare of Egypt was his sole goal, and he took it to be that also of her inhabitants. A single obstruction now alone blocked his path. It was France. Since 1882 this Power had consistently hindered and thwarted Great Britain's plans in Egypt. That country, it must be said, was often only a stalking horse: French interference and opposition was inspired by desire to pay off a diplomatic reverse elsewhere. In one quarter of the globe or other, there was always cause for quarrel. West Africa provided one fruitful field: Newfoundland, Siam, and Morocco others. Neither government was free from blame: each in turn was provocative and aggressive. Some of the disputes were perennial, others bade fair to become no less permanent. Such was the situation in the spring of 1896, when the British government authorized the re-occupation of Dongola. France learnt the news with pain and indignation: she foresaw that operations would not stop at the conquest of a single province.

Egypt's incapacity to finance the campaign was obvious. Her reserve fund amounted only to the modest sum of £417,000, and the government could not stake all upon a single throw of the dice-box. In the embarrassment she turned to the commission of public debt. It was well able to afford assistance. A substantial balance of £2,717,000 lay unused in its chest, and the Khedivial decree of the 12th July, 1888, provided authority to apply part of the sum to the expense of the campaign. The German, Austrian and Italian mem-

[1] Sir W. Garstin estimated that expenditure upon irrigation during the period 1885–1902 amounted to £E.17,000,000, and that the cultivable land of Egypt during these years was increased by 700,000 feddans. (See *Descriptive Note upon Nile Reservoir Works*, Government publication, 1902.)

bers supported their British colleagues, and voted a grant of £500,000. But the matter did not rest there. The representatives of France and Russia contested the legality of a decision that was not unanimous,[1] and a syndicate of holders of Egyptian stock brought an action in the Mixed tribunals. Judgment was given in their favour, and the Khedivial government ordered to repay the sum. It was a short-lived triumph for France. Great Britain intervened and provided the sum.[2]

Military operations ended in the capture of Khartoum, and the Anglo-Egyptian forces pushed on to Fashoda. There they discovered that intrepid Frenchman, Marchand, encamped on the bank of the river. Some painful hours of suspense followed. Peace and war trembled in the balance, and Europe listened anxiously for the first clash of arms. The crisis passed, and happily its moral was not lost. Great Britain, impressed by this narrow escape from war, began to reconsider her traditional policy of keeping clear of international obligations, and contracted a defensive and offensive alliance with Japan. They now took a step further, and began a conversation with France. The French at this moment needed British support in Morocco, almost as much as England required their good offices in Egypt, and made no inconvenient stipulations about parliamentary sanction.[3] The declaration concerning Egypt and Morocco [4] was the outcome.

With his customary reticence Lord Cromer did not disclose the part he had played in bringing about an understanding with France, and the public gave the credit to other brains. Certainly no individual profited more from the declaration

[1] That candid and impartial historian de Freycinet declares that France and Russia were ready to consent, if Great Britain on her part admitted unconditionally the internationalization of the Suez Canal, and would define the term of her occupation of Egypt (page 383, *La Question d'Egypte*). Great Britain would make no such bargain.

[2] On the 6th February, 1897, Parliament approved of a cash advance to Egypt of £800,000 at the rate of 2¾ per cent. interest.

[3] Germany was less accommodating when she endeavoured to make terms with England. Her overtures came to nothing, since Lord Salisbury would not agree to two preliminary conditions: the incorporation of Great Britain in the Triple alliance, and the sanction of parliament to the steps.

[4] 8th April, 1904.

than Cromer, since it relieved him from the fear that a timid cabinet might withdraw from Egypt for the sake of peace, before England had completed her mission. That anxiety was now removed. On the one hand, Great Britain undertook to make no change in the political status of Egypt; on the other, France accepted the occupation. Egypt also stood to gain from the agreement. Hitherto her finance had been at the mercy of an international control, and unused balances had accumulated in the vaults of the commission of the public debt. The declaration put an end to that wasteful practice. It authorized Egypt to spend surplus revenue as she thought fit, it restricted the commission to the exercise of duties legitimately associated with a public debt. Other changes followed that benefited the State without injuring its creditors. Hitherto the debt charges had been paid partly from railway and telegraph receipts; the land tax was now substituted for them. Thus the investor obtained a security subject to less fluctuation, and the treasury was in a position to apply surplus receipts to development. And lest a timid bondholder should feel uncertain of the bargain, the government agreed to keep at his disposal a permanent reserve of £1,800,000 and a cash balance of £500,000. It was handsome security.

Thus of the international obligations that hampered Egypt, only the capitulations now remained, and Cromer endeavoured to find escape from them. His task was twofold. He had first to educate public opinion on the need for reform, and next to provide an alternative that would reconcile the foreign community to their loss. The business was not particularly easy. If the European could not deny the many anomalies, legislative and financial,[1] that arose out of the capitulations, he undoubtedly questioned the will and capacity of the occupation to protect his interests. Moreover Lord Cromer's hands were already tied by an article of the Anglo-French declaration, that acknowledged the rights enjoyed by France in virtue of treaties, conventions and usage. To that engagement Great Britain had scrupulously to adhere. But the article in question was not necessarily the last word upon the subject. It was possible that France,

[1] See a memorandum dated 9th January, 1905, by Sir W. E. Brunyate. (*Egypt No. 1, 1905.*)

honourably desirous of fulfilling the spirit of the agreement, would not oppose the reform of the capitulations, when Great Britain announced that Egypt was ready for the introduction of a rational legislative and judicial system.

The capitulations of Egypt are a relic of a primitive civilization, distrustful of strangers, yet dependent upon their services. Early in her history Rome recognized the need of them. She opened her gates to the commercial world, she sanctioned its contracts, she offered its members certain privileges. Soon there was established a commercial tribunal, presided over by a *prætor peregrinus*, who administered the *jus gentium*.[1] For many centuries Rome dominated the trade routes to the east: then with the decline of the empire, that command passed to the hands of others. In Egypt the Fatimids and Ayubites stood astride over one line of approach, in Syria the Crusaders over a second, almost as convenient and popular. Between the two rivals fierce competition raged. Each tempted the trader to despatch his merchandize exclusively through their territory. To this end El Faiz, the last but one of the Fatimid Sultans, accorded to the town of Pisa special favours, and in A.D. 1173 Saladin confirmed the grant.[2] But another had in the east been before these princes. Four hundred years before Saladin came to the throne of Egypt the Emperor Charlemagne had taken under his protection European pilgrims to the Holy Land, and offered them indulgences which culminated in the Assise of Jerusalem, that "precious monument of feudal jurisprudence" framed by Godfrey of Bouillon.[3] The later Crusaders reduced the haphazard concessions of the Assise to legal form. Certain Italian cities co-operated in a naval blockade of the Syrian coast, and in return obtained from their allies exemption of traders from the jurisdiction of local courts and from local taxation. Kait

[1] F. P. Walton in Chapters XXII and XXXVI, *Introduction to Roman Law* (Green & Son, Edinburgh, 1903), traces the origin and duties of the *prætor peregrinus*. This prætor is first heard of about 242 B.C., when he adjudicated in commercial suits between foreigners resident in Rome and between Romans and foreigners.

[2] *The Capitulations of Egypt* (Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Company, London, 1909), by J. H. Scott.

[3] Chapter LVII, Volume VI, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

Bey, Mameluke Sultan of Egypt, followed the example, and in 1488 concluded with the Florentines a treaty, which permitted them to reside and trade in Egypt, to practise their religion, to settle disputes according to their law, and to escape oppressive and vexatious taxation.

The preamble of each capitulation or treaty sufficiently indicates the spirit that inspired its grant. The trader paid heavily in private for his immunity, but he enjoyed in return substantial advantages. He lived in the security of a *Khan*, untroubled by the police or the tax collector. Nor did the Turkish conquest of Egypt impair his privileges: Suliman, well disposed to commerce, even extended them to Constantinople. France was the first to profit from this monarch's good nature, and as early as 1535, through consuls she was administering the interests of all French subjects throughout Ottoman dominions. Other Powers soon claimed similar rights, and the rivalry split Europe into two camps. France, insisting that she alone had the right to protect foreigners irrespective of nationality, violently protested when England obtained in 1581 a treaty in favour of the Levant company. It was the beginning of a bitter and prolonged struggle. Matters came to a head over the protection of Dutch interests, a dispute that continued until the Sultan granted Holland the favours he had extended to France and England. Other governments clamoured for the privilege, and in the course of time all Christian Powers were treated alike. Formal treaties displaced the early unilateral procedure, and capitulations became uniform.

In the interminable quarrels between Turk and Mameluke in Egypt, the European trader took no part. Individuals walked warily, consuls defended their nationals with discretion, and from the oppression and misrule, which characterized this period, the foreign community escaped. Their lives were safe, their possessions no less so. The firm administration of Mohammed Ali inspired further confidence: for that sagacious ruler watched the interests of the European in Egypt as his own. He interpreted generously the spirit of the capitulations, and extended their practice.[1] The con-

[1] One instance may be given. He admitted the expression "inviolability of domicile" to include not only inviolability of the home, but of its garden, and of the owner's office or shop.

cessions were inspired by the frank belief that Egypt required European capital. They were halcyon times for traders enterprising enough to profit from the occasion. Then as commerce increased in volume, the man of business speculated whether his privileges were not purchased at too great a cost. Hitherto he had submitted to an archaic legal procedure, as an inconvenience inseparable from his position: he desired now to replace it by practice corresponding more nearly with modern ideals. An honest suitor found legal redress a lengthy and expensive luxury. In the maze of the capitulations, justice stumbled, and frequently did not recover her balance. Custom ordained in suits between foreigners of different nationalities, the defendant's court as the competent tribunal: but in a counterclaim, the defendant laid his complaint before the plaintiff's consul. It was perplexing enough. A suitor could be plaintiff one day, defendant the next, and no party suffered more heavily from the procedure than the Egyptian government. Custom also required the native tribunals to hear suits instituted by foreigners against the Egyptian government. In theory this was well enough: but unhappily these tribunals had a sorry reputation, and few Europeans cared to trust to their sense of equity. Thus in practice, the aggrieved party leaving law alone, invoked the aid of diplomacy, and Egypt usually smarted from the intervention.

Out of the confusion, the Khedive Ismail vainly endeavoured to establish order. For ten years he wrangled and wrestled with the capitulary Powers. France and Italy opposed reform: but despite the obstinate attitude of the first, Nubar Pasha in 1876 succeeded in creating the Mixed tribunals. It was a great achievement. Originally Ismail had planned the creation of a single judicature applicable to all the inhabitants of Egypt: but the Powers, sceptical of the Khedive's good faith, confined reform to more modest limits.[1] The Mixed tribunals stood the test of time. Their

[1] Lord Cromer in *Egypt No. 1, 1907*, shortly describes the rights and privileges enjoyed by the foreign community thus: "First, the Mixed tribunals adjudicate upon all civil and commercial suits and disputes connected with the ownership of land, between Europeans and Egyptians, between Europeans of different nationalities, and between Europeans and the Egyptian government. Secondly consular courts applying their own national laws adjudicate upon

international character [1] has been maintained, their impartiality has been unquestioned. It was relatively a simple matter to define the jurisdiction and procedure of the new tribunals : there was more difficulty in authorizing them to apply new legislation to the foreign community. At one moment agreement seemed impossible, so conflicting and numerous were the interests involved, and Nubar had almost abandoned hope, when his ingenious mind lit upon a compromise. A commission, representative of the capitulatory Powers, would examine every proposal of the government relating to legislation and taxation of foreigners. But its conclusions, even when unanimous, could not be final, and each Power preserved the right of approving or rejecting them. It was no empty formality. Time and again one government has blocked urgent legislation indefinitely. Even when opposition is not forthcoming, prolonged delay takes place before Egypt can apply taxation to the foreigner.[2]

Lord Cromer's advocacy bore no fruit, and his plea that the capitulations embarrassed the European as much as the Egyptian carried no weight. It was equally useless for him to urge that the establishment of a council [3] chosen from the European community and supported by the British and Egyptian governments, would preserve all capitulatory privileges worth keeping. The foreigner would have none of

criminal charges and suits of succession. Thirdly, the Egyptian police may not violate the domicile of a foreigner until consular authority is obtained ; and, fourthly, the Egyptian government must obtain the consent of all the Powers before imposing direct taxation upon Europeans."

[1] It is sufficient to say that the Powers now appoint forty-two out of sixty-four members of the bench, and that a suitor may plead in English, French, Italian or Arabic.

[2] The house tax is a capital illustration. Negotiation began in December, 1883 : but the decree authorizing its application to foreigners was not published until April, 1886. Later, two years were wasted before all capitulatory Powers agreed to increasing this tax by 2 per cent., in order to pay for the cost of installing main drainage in Cairo.

[3] The Council was to consist of 4 British officials, 1 European judge of the Egyptian Court of Appeal, 6 judges of the Mixed tribunals, 20 elected members, and 5 unofficial members nominated by the Egyptian Government. Total, 36. (*Egypt No. 1, 1907.*)

it. Nor were reflective Egyptians better disposed to the idea. A council or chamber from which they were excluded, exercising supreme authority over legislation and taxation, would indefinitely prolong the occupation of Great Britain, and they were unprepared to pay that price for relief from the capitulations. In short, it was obvious that Cromer could count upon no support outside the ranks of the civil service. He underrated the strength of the opposition, as other Englishmen did later. Lord Milner and Sir William Brunyate committed the same error. Each thought to put an end to the capitulations in their existing form : each failed in the endeavour, and Egypt carries the embarrassing burden to this day.

CHAPTER VIII

NATIONALISM

Lord Cromer was profoundly surprised at the rebuff. He had discounted European suspicion ; but he could think of no hypothesis to explain that of the Egyptian. Of it there could be little doubt. The columns of the local press indicated disapproval pretty clearly, society was hardly less reticent.[1] It was very puzzling. Egypt certainly was invited to surrender a formal right of legislation : but by the concession, she would get rid of the capitulations, that lay like a millstone round her neck, and in the judgment of Lord Cromer the bargain was greatly in Egypt's favour. He was the more perplexed from the knowledge that the Egyptian hitherto had acquiesced in many decisions of the occupation, that touched his sovereign rights more nearly. The Anglo-Egyptian convention of 1899, which ratified Great Britain's title to part ownership of the Sudan, was one instance in point ; the Anglo-French declaration of 1904, that admitted the existence of the occupation, a second. But silence of Egypt on these matters and other infringements of their liberties hid in reality profound resentment, and this creation of a council from which the Egyptian legislator was excluded, embittered public feeling. It was a severe blow to the national pride. Educated men now laid aside their mask, and declaimed against the sentence of perpetual political servitude. Their conscience suddenly awoke to this supreme indignity.

[1] In reviewing Lord Cromer's proposal, Sir Eldon Gorst speaks thus : "Lord Cromer in his last report indicated the general lines on which he thought the problem might be solved, but he laid emphasis upon the fact that his final opinion would largely depend upon the reception accorded to his views by the leading European and Egyptian residents. So far, however, there has been no sign of unanimity on the part of local officials, settlers, Europeans or natives." (*Egypt No. 1, 1908.*)

It was a new sensation for Egypt : she had felt nothing like it before. Her people were no strangers to discontent : but the inspiration hitherto had been misgovernment, or religious conviction, more than that sense of humiliation which comes from subjection. The instinct of freedom went to sleep with the coming of the Roman, and the Egyptian ceased to struggle against his misfortune. Few of the succeeding invaders brought a measure of prosperity to their subjects : Amr and Mohammed Ali were the most, perhaps the only, honourable exceptions. And the fame of both would have been more lasting, had they shared the cares of government with the people. But that intention was never in their thoughts. Egypt was theirs by right of conquest, and they were the sole arbiters of her destinies. Mohammed Ali loved his kingdom beyond a doubt, and laboured to promote its welfare, as no other ruler had done before him. But his affection was centred on the soil, not on the peasant ; his husbandship of the national resources was guided by his interests, not by that of the country. He wanted no partner or associate in his rule : his conception of a pattern state was a submissive people, resigned to the will of their sovereign. It was a simple ideal, that served this indomitable prince very well. His descendants, inferior in talent and resolution, inherited, but could not profit from, it.

But subjection cannot permanently destroy the virility of a nation, and oppression did not rob Egypt of all aspirations towards liberty. Accident in the shape of an occupation inspired by no selfish motive of dominion or greed, breathed fresh life on them, and Egypt stirred uneasily. The period of probation seemed very long, and in the opening years of the twentieth century she confidently awaited the announcement of its end. It was not forthcoming. Lord Cromer did not alter his course : he was engaged in a race against time. His career in Egypt was drawing to an end, and he wished to accomplish her reconstruction before he went. For this reason he was indisposed to experiment with problems that did not bear upon that business, and he left their solution to the judgment of his successors. Nor was he indeed convinced of the wisdom of admitting Egyptians to enlarged political responsibilities. Lord Dufferin's modest programme had satisfied the needs of the

country for a generation : it might well continue to do so for another. Egypt had still some time to wait before her probation could be safely terminated : such was Lord Cromer's conviction. He was not unsympathetic with reasonable aspirations, and he was too clear-sighted to believe that any alien administration can be satisfactory, which is unpopular with the governed : but he was also averse to hurrying the future, and he sincerely believed that the bulk of Egyptians were content with his paternal conduct of administration. That surmise was mistaken, but others shared the error. Few Englishmen who knew Egypt intimately at this period, would admit that the people were dissatisfied. The hostility of the governing classes they felt and understood : it was less easy to believe in that of the fellahin. To the latter the occupation had brought countless blessings. To it they owed suppression of the kourbash and the corvée, reform of taxation, and the purification of justice : a sufficient answer incidentally to the charge that Great Britain was concerned only with the rehabilitation of finance. Nor had the Egyptian notable less reason to be grateful for escape from negligent and corrupt administration. He had been, almost as much as the fellah, a victim of it. Only the more powerful families, descendants of the agents and favourites of Mohammed Ali, enjoyed at the time of the British occupation the favour of government. Its direction had long lain in Turkish hands. Mohammed Ali soon discovered that he could not govern without them, and a host of needy and unscrupulous Albanians and Turks hurried toAlexandria to offer their services. There was usually some office of profit awaiting any new-comer, plausible enough to catch the ear of the viceroy. His partiality for subordinates of his own blood and speech was intelligible enough, and Mohammed Ali only followed tradition, when he obeyed the instinct. But the dangers of an alien administration are obvious, and a prudent ruler reduces their incidence by the introduction of fresh blood. Mohammed Ali, a far-sighted and cautious man, conformed to that excellent practice : his successors pursued it less consistently. There was no longer need for them to seek agents outside Egypt. Mohammed Ali had been a liberal master. So long as public security was maintained, revenue collected, the army and the corvée kept up

to establishment, and complaint strangled at its birth, he seldom asked a lieutenant inconvenient questions. Provincial administration took advantage of this silence, and so well did the air of Egypt suit the Turk, that he made the country his permanent home, living comfortably on the crumbs and perquisites of a lucrative office. His numbers were presently increased by the influx of others from Algeria and Greece : refugees who, finding a friend in the viceroy, prospered and multiplied. Thus there grew up in Egypt a spurious and alien aristocracy, claiming the privileges of a favoured class, acknowledging no obligation in return. Abbas, Said, and Ismail, Mohammed Ali's successors, patronized it partly through instinct of blood, partly through belief that the Turkish colonist was the backbone of the throne. It was a mistaken conviction : the Egyptian-Turk had lost the virility that distinguished his ancestors.

That lesson Tewfik never learnt. No sooner was Arabi crushed, than the Khedive sought to re-establish Turkish ideals of government. The ambition would have undone the moral of Tel el Kebir, and Great Britain could not afford the sacrifice. That battle had indeed killed Turkish influence in Egypt : but unhappily there was nothing to take its place. The patriotism that had faintly flavoured the revolt, did not survive the rout of the army, and the country insensibly slipped back into a melancholy groove. It was a gloomy outlook for the occupation, already entangled in rash promises to Europe. Nothing would arouse enthusiasm for reform. The suppression of an abuse here and there awoke no response : over the people there had crept a disappointing apathy. It was impossible to discover their desires, since from no quarter could the occupation obtain independent suggestion or advice. From this universal silence, one conclusion alone was possible : the British garrison must remain. So much was clear, the rest obscure.

But public opinion did not dare venture on expression in those days : apprehension sealed men's lips, and concealed their hopes and fears. No one ventured to prophesy, no one dared criticize the government. An indiscreet phrase was often sufficient to cause the arrest of the speaker, and the prisons were crowded with men suspected of disloyalty.

There was no sign of a national consciousness. Of men who had played a part in the recent upheaval, the more prominent were in exile, others awaiting trial, or engaged in making terms with authority. From the situation, little comfort could be extracted. Ministers and the ruling classes were looking to Constantinople for a signal, the provincial notable was perplexed by the tender partiality of the occupation for the poor and lowly, and the fellah was struggling against the double visitation of a low Nile and of cholera. Only El Azhar, that ancient seminary of Islamic piety and learning, denounced the subjection of a Moslem country to Christian rule. It was the call of the fanatic to the ignorant. Egypt listened, but made no answer. She had no more stomach for fighting, and the bulk of the people were indisposed to continue their quarrel with government. Only among the professional and commercial classes of the capital and larger towns did El Azhar find sympathizers. It was not unnatural that these men should lend an ear: misrule had pressed less heavily upon them than upon the fellahin. Taxation was lighter in the towns, authority more accessible. Every ruler of Egypt has looked upon the land as his main source of revenue, since the fruits of the soil are more easily taxed than earnings, and the agriculturist is more defenceless than the merchant. He cannot combine so readily, he will not leave his fields to make a protest. Even the Mameluke and Turk seldom ventured to provoke Cairo beyond endurance, and the disorder that marked Tewfik's first years of rule, inspired his ministers with wholesome respect for its prejudices. But that timidity did not influence the occupation, and Englishmen snapped their fingers at the opinion of Cairo. In return the citizen scoffed at the reforms of which the occupation boasted, and ridiculed Lord Dufferin's constitution as a slight upon intelligence and education.[1] His indignation was the greater when he reflected that while each province through an elected council enjoyed control over its domestic business, Cairo, the capital, was allowed none. Nor did the incursion of Englishmen into the civil service lessen their sense of irritation. It was bad enough to suffer foreigners in the technical branches of the ad-

[1] The qualification necessary for membership of the legislative council was mainly property.

ministration, to admit them to the executive services also, signified the exclusion of Egyptians from responsibility of government.

El Azhar's triumph was short-lived. Its aims were too reactionary for the sober-minded Moslem, and he shrank from identifying himself with sheikhs, who wished to conduct the regeneration of Egypt upon Islamic lines. A programme that began by denying political rights to a Christian minority made little appeal to educated judgment, and the breach between the university and the professional class slowly widened. With instruction had come a more rational interpretation of Islam, and a truer perception of human solidarity. The elucidation of doctrinal disputes had ceased to occupy Moslem leisure, and the study of politics was taking the vacant place. Other forces co-operated in accomplishing the evolution. In their passion for reconstruction, Englishmen were challenging El Azhar's traditional supremacy in law and education. Hardly was national solvency assured, than they set about the reform of both. Higher standards of teaching were introduced into the government schools, the programme of instruction was discreetly revised. The new curriculum sharpened the mentality of the student, and he had now to trust to wit as well as to memory. Simultaneously the administration of justice came under review, and the religious tribunals underwent radical reform. El Azhar's monopoly of them was overthrown, and the State took in hand the education of the bench and bar. It was a belated but welcome reform. In theory the educated Moslem continued to acknowledge the righteousness of the command, "every dispute ye shall have one with another ye shall bring before God and Mohammed": but none the less he was glad at heart of his deliverance from a negligent and antiquated procedure. In the process of these reforms, El Azhar suffered. Its graduates were forced to wander in a world which had less use for their services. Their presence in a house was still accounted an honour, and the household felt an obligation to listen respectfully to the words of the visitor. But these are the customary courtesies of Egyptian life, and the sheikh is now less sure of his welcome. The decline of the university, in reputation, it may be said, continues, nor is it likely to be stayed, until the leaders relin-

quish their primitive ideals and amend their methods of instruction.[1] Originally El Azhar, like the colleges of Baghdad and Busra, did not seek to teach. They were houses of prayer and argument, where the pious spent their time in the interpretation of the words of Mohammed. There was then no question of professors and pupils. Some expounded, others listened, and out of discussion arose difference of opinion, and the need of definition. It was often not forthcoming: but youth eagerly drank in abstractions, and recognized the need of study. Thenceforth doctrine and education marched hand in hand, and law trod closely at their heels. Knowledge was then synonymous with dogma, until in the passage of time, the first became of less account. El Azhar clung to the second. The pursuit has cost her dear.

The educated Egyptian was also escaping from the discipline of Islam. He followed the injunctions of the Koran less scrupulously, he practised the prescribed ritual with less regularity. In his progress from misery to affluence, he found the way of piety increasingly difficult to follow. A faith and practice designed for men accustomed to the asperities of the desert, have little in common with standards of settled life. A lawyer cannot break off his address in court, or a surgeon pause at the operation table, in order to repeat his prayers, nor will nor can professional men engage in the exhausting fast of Ramadan, and undertake the fatiguing privations of a pilgrimage to Mecca. Upon such minds the stern demands of Islam fall flat, and the failure of panislamism in Egypt drove home the point. Its apostles secured few disciples among the fellahin, fewer still among the professional classes. Lord Cromer, it is true, for awhile thought otherwise, hoping perhaps to find in this gospel an explanation of the restlessness of the country under the rule of the occupation. Reflection soon convinced him of that error. No people are more profoundly detached from the concerns of

[1] See issue of October, 1925, *The Nineteenth Century and After*, for an article, "*El Azhar University*," by Pierre Arminjon and Pierre Crabites: "The low standard of education required for admission is partly responsible for the decline. To satisfy the examining authority, the candidate need only be able to read and write, and to repeat from memory at least one half of the Koran."

others than the Egyptian, no people are less disposed to make a sacrifice of their lives and savings in order to promote a universal brotherhood of Moslem people. Not every Egyptian is an altruist. Altruism does not flourish on Egyptian soil.

Religion indeed has played little part in creating the modern national conscience of Egypt. The just and even rule of England sowed the seed, the steady progress of education and the liberty of the press matured the crop. England rescued Egyptian education from the blight that had settled upon it. Of the multitude of schools and colleges founded by Mohammed Ali, few survived his death, and of those established by Ismail, the majority were engaged in a hopeless struggle against a defective organization and an inefficient staff of teachers. Great Britain's conduct of public instruction is often a favourite line of attack with critics of the occupation. Part of the abuse is just, but part arises from too hasty generalization. The Englishmen in charge, no doubt, were frequently impatient of any views upon education but their own, and careless whether their procedure wounded Egyptian susceptibility. So much perhaps is true. But there is another side of the picture. They succeeded in raising the general standard of education year by year, they persuaded the government to exclude from the civil service Egyptians who had not passed through a secondary school. That success at once led to a cry for more schools. They were not forthcoming. The State could not afford the expenditure, the parent would not contribute more than half the cost of educating his son. To that disinclination more than to failure on the part of educational authority, may be attributed the slow advance of instruction in Egypt.

The Egyptian boy is an apt and docile pupil ; but in the hurry of providing him with instruction authority neglected to furnish him with character. Outside the class-room, he ran wild, and before long his undisciplined mind resented admonition within its walls. He was an easy victim to unscrupulous men, and politics became his absorbing passion. The press encouraged the tendency, and spoke of the student as the hope of the country. There was no antidote then to the misrepresentation, that filled the columns of all Egyptian newspapers. Little good can indeed be said of the press of

those days. The news it provided was unreliable, the leading articles were ill informed.[1] There were few books, and little Arabic literature on sale to counteract the deficiency.[2] With characteristic indifference Lord Cromer ignored the campaign of calumny, and went on with his work. But his toleration was pushed perhaps too far. The British official unaccustomed to read the Arabic newspapers, was seldom moved by their comment, but his Egyptian colleagues smarted severely under the lash. There was complaint that this constant abuse of authority impaired the prestige of government. Cromer was more doubtful, and he hesitated to curtail any form of public expression. Yet a weapon of repression, the press law of November, 1881, lay ready at hand. He could have made use of it had he thought fit: but he chose, perhaps on account of an unfortunate experience in the past, to employ a less obvious alternative. He had already persuaded a group of notables to form a political party, known as the *Hisbet el Umma*, or party of the people, that advocated co-operation with Great Britain: he now urged the leaders to publish a daily paper, that would reflect that aim. The venture was not very successful. Cost of production proved greater than estimates suggested, and sales were disappointing. The influence of *El Garida* upon public opinion was not perceptible, and little by little the paper changed its tone. Less was written about the wisdom of co-operation, more about the broken pledges of England. Soon indeed only greater restraint of language distinguished the opinions of *El Garida* from those of its contemporaries.

[1] It is right to say that Egyptian journalism has improved out of all knowledge. It maintains now a respectable literary standard and watches its correspondents and reporters pretty closely.

[2] From a purely literary point of view, matters have not greatly improved with the passage of years. During the winter of 1924–25, an inquirer endeavoured to ascertain the quantity of wholesome literature published in Arabic, and sold in the Cairo Bazaar. The investigator found some 400 volumes, half of which were translations of the works of European writers. Authorship in fact in Egypt has never become a paying profession, and " best sellers " are unknown. Even pamphlets reviewing important political issues do not always cover the cost of publication. So little favour does original literature find in Cairo that authors have been known to describe their books as " translated by . . ." in the hope that the trick will increase its sale.

While Cromer was pondering over antidotes, the ground without warning gave way beneath his feet. A national party, proclaiming their goal to be the complete independence of Egypt and the Sudan, claimed the suffrages of Egyptians. It was the work of Mustapha Kamel, a young lawyer, lately returned from France. He was a powerful speaker, and he had a trenchant pen : yet despite these advantages, he made little headway in the first stages of his campaign. Conditions were not particularly propitious, and outside a few professional men and students, he acquired no support. Egypt remained obstinately neutral. She submitted to the occupation not only because time had accustomed her to it, but because she had learnt that politics lead to war, and war to evils worse than political servitude. Of public remonstrance there was none either at home or abroad. The press clamoured, but its readers were dumb. Nor was there union among them. Religious and class differences sharply divided the country. The Copt was suspicious of the Moslem, the fellah of the town. To repair this discord was the first business of Mustapha Kamel. He succeeded : but he owed the triumph very largely to the tragic episode of Dinshawai.[1] The severity of the punishment inflicted upon the offenders horrified the Egyptian peasant, and drove him into the arms of the national party. The notable followed, and the Copt temporarily forgot his quarrel with the Moslem. Thus was the occupation confronted with a people gathered together in one political camp.

But if Dinshawai was the torch, it was the students of Cairo who laid the fire. Over them Mustapha Kamel had obtained singular and complete ascendency. His authority and his programme were alike unquestioned, and the stu-

[1] A party of British officers in June, 1906, went to shoot pigeons in the village of Dinshawai. Their visit was the result of a misunderstanding. The inhabitants resented the presence of the shooting party, and the latter beat a hasty retreat. One officer lost his life, and twenty villagers stood their trial. A special court judged the affair. Four of the accused suffered death, the others imprisonment and flogging. Lord Cromer was not in Egypt when judgment was given : but the British government must surely have sought his opinion before approving the sentences. It has long since been admitted that the punishment was excessive, and Cromer himself later concurred in that view.

dents carried his message into every hole and corner of Egypt, arguing with the obstinate, and encouraging the faint-hearted. In other countries parents and teachers would have taken these youthful advocates sharply to task: lessons, not politics, were more obviously their immediate business in life. But discipline at home and in the school had sunk to a low ebb. In the class-room boys flung away their books rather than suffer punishment, at home they paid no more attention to the advice of their elders. Fathers and masters looked with misgiving upon these escapades: but neither would exert their authority, each protesting that the task was the duty of the other. Discipline did not improve with the appointment in the spring of 1906 of a British adviser to the department of education. The schools took offence, and the pupils absented themselves from the class-room. It was the opportunity for the national party to deliver a general attack upon the government. National education became a battle-ground. The use of English and French as the medium of instruction was loudly condemned,[1] and an imperious cry for Arabic to take their place was raised. Certainly the wisdom of teaching subjects of general application in a foreign tongue was not apparent to every one. The experiment might promote interest in European literature and science, as it was reported to have done in India: but that advantage would be bought too high, if it lowered the pupil's standard of knowledge. Excellent reasons, no doubt, could be produced for continuing the existing procedure in Egypt:[2] but it is also fair to confess that the national party were not alone in maintaining that the pursuit of a European language to undue limits, did disservice to the cause of education in Egypt. Many English-

[1] It must be said that Great Britain did not introduce the practice in Egypt. The Khedive Ismail had done so early in his reign.

[2] They were presented by Mr. Dunlop of the department of education in a memorandum addressed to Lord Cromer, dated 10th February, 1906. In it, the writer argued that proficiency in a living language was best secured by employing it as a general medium of instruction. He declared in favour of English or French for the following reasons: "government administrations demand it, the professional colleges demand it, Egyptian parents clamour for it, the immediate future of educational extension and improvement depends upon it."

men in the service of the Khedivial government took the same view.

Lord Cromer was not of their number. He saw no need to reverse the system, he suspected that politics inspired the cry for change. Had he thought differently, he would have introduced quickly enough fresh blood into the department : for it was not his practice to retain lieutenants, whose views ran counter to his own. None the less the campaign and continued indiscipline impressed him so far, that he considered the need of making some concession to public opinion. In this end he transformed the department of education into a ministry, and placed at its head an Egyptian of his own choice. It was Saad Pasha Zaghlul, a member of the Court of Appeal,[1] a man of unblemished character, and of some reputation in legal circles. Of his influence over public opinion less could be said with certainty. To the public his name was little known, and what notoriety he enjoyed was derived largely from his marriage with a daughter of Mustapha Pasha Fehmi, the prime minister. But Cromer had marked this Egyptian's quality and liked him none the worse for his frank support of reasonable aspirations. Zaghlul at this period was no revolutionary. He disapproved of rupture with England, and he dissociated himself altogether from political programmes that advocated violence. Memories of 1882, when he had narrowly escaped punishment for participation in the conspiracy of Arabi, still lingered unpleasantly in his recollection.

Zaghlul was a better judge than minister. He neither restored order in the schools, nor dammed the torrent of criticism that flowed outside. The fault was only partially his : his hands were tied by the presence of a British adviser in the ministry. He was expected to submit to the latter's judgment, and yet undertake responsibility in Egyptian eyes. It was an embarrassing situation for both men. Their ideals were as poles apart, and each thought the other misguided. In the clash of wills the Englishman did not

[1] Lord Cromer retained a high and particular regard for Zaghlul. In a farewell address to the community, delivered in the Opera-house of Cairo a few days before his departure, he said : "He (Zaghlul) possesses all the qualities necessary to serve his country. He has the courage of his convictions, he is honest, he is capable."

always come off best: unless support from the agency was forthcoming, he had frequently to concur in measures that he believed injurious to the cause of education. Conditions such as these bred antagonism and distrust. Suspicious of advice, and ignorant of technique, Zaghlul floundered from one educational pitfall into another. His mistakes were seized on by the press: he was mercilessly pilloried in its columns, and accused of trafficking with the enemies of Egypt. The insinuation was more than he would stand. He hit back, and presently the journalist found to his chagrin that the minister had ways and means of his own of chastising slanderers. It may be doubted also whether the particular British adviser was best suited by temperament to guide this obstinate and fiery Egyptian. His knowledge of all that appertained to public instruction was profound, his tenacity of will was no less remarkable: yet it must also be said that dislike of experiment and inherent caution partially discounted these advantages. And so numerous were the minister's stumbles, and so tolerant was Lord Cromer of them, that more than one Englishman suspected a deeper design in the appointment of Zaghlul, than anxiety about discipline. The rumour passed that Cromer was contemplating a revision of relations between ministers and advisers, and between that belief and the cynical theory that the duel between Zaghlul and Dunlop would demonstrate the unfitness of Egyptians for administrative authority, there appeared to some observers no alternative. But such speculation left out of account Cromer's honesty. He had his share of human frailty no doubt: but that he would stoop to subterfuge was impossible. The appointment of Zaghlul to be minister of education had no inner significance. It was an administrative experiment, and no more.

Lord Cromer did not stay to watch its development. In the spring of 1907 his last despatch had been written, his last decision given. He had come to Egypt twenty-four years earlier, he was making way for a younger man. His life had been a full one, and he had reached an age when prudent servants relinquish authority lest their vigour forsake them. There had never been much leisure or repose for him in Egypt, and Cromer was indisposed to shoulder fresh troubles. His eye had already detected their approach.

Finance was likely to be one. A passion for spending had taken the place of the parsimony once so rigidly practised. France honourably keeping to the spirit of her agreement, no longer scrutinized expenditure, and a new financial adviser was in office, more liberal of public money than his predecessor. Revenue was growing, it is true: but expenditure had kept pace with it, and the margin between the two kept the reserve fund to a modest figure. The resources of Egypt were strained not only in satisfying her own needs, but by the incapacity of the Sudan to make both ends meet. No responsible Egyptian had yet questioned the wisdom of these grants in aid of the Sudan: but that forbearance could not be counted upon indefinitely. The national party's denunciation of the Anglo-Egyptian Convention of January, 1899, indicated the way the wind was setting, and it was not in the interest of England at this moment to wrangle over the interpretation of that agreement.

A further anxiety was the altered attitude of Egypt towards the occupation. She had begun to challenge both the necessity and the virtue of it. Time and again responsible British ministers had described the condition as a temporary expedient, designed to repair the ravages of misgovernment, and Egyptians confidently expected Great Britain to name a day when her troops would be withdrawn. She did not do so, and indeed appeared to be consolidating her rule. Nor would Egypt admit virtue in an occupation that ignored her political education. An earlier promise on the part of Great Britain to instruct her in the art had never been fulfilled, and Egypt after a generation of British control was less mistress in her own home than ever. It was a dismal reflection.

It is doubtful if Lord Cromer permitted his imagination to wander far in this field. His published despatches avoided the subject, his coolness towards visitors who urged the Egyptian point of view was notorious. Certainly there was no hour during his long term of office that could fairly be described as propitious to set afoot experiment. The first years were occupied in reducing the abuses of corrupt and oppressive government, the later in consolidating tentative reform. He was successful in both endeavours, and he has left a memory of achievement that will abide, so long as history is written and read. He was not wholly free from

frailty : he was often impatient, and sometimes ungenerous in his judgment. But these and other imperfections did not obscure his nobility of character, or mask his freedom from the petty meannesses of mankind. He was profoundly interested in all matters pertaining to the happiness of Egypt and her people. No suitor knocked in vain at the agency, no petition was too insignificant to be read. Well might Cromer have inscribed over his study door the words *Homo sum. Humani nihil a me alienum puto.*

CHAPTER IX

THE SUDAN

In the preceding pages are occasional references to the Sudan. But this vast dependency cannot be dismissed so lightly : for the Sudan was once a constant thorn in the side of Great Britain, and has been a perpetual and irritating reminder of the British occupation to Egypt. It strained Egyptian resources in men and money at an inopportune moment, it stopped the withdrawal of British troops from Cairo, and it nearly involved England in war with France. So much and more may be fairly laid at the door of the Sudan. And since this is so, it seems desirable to indicate the origin of Egypt's claim to sovereignty over the Sudan, to relate the events that forced her to abandon its territory, and to trace the causes that led to a convention regulating the future relations of Great Britain and Egypt in the upper valley of the Nile.

Egypt's connection with the dependency began in 1820, when Mohammed Ali despatched an expedition under the command of his younger son Ismail to Sennaar. That kingdom had had a long and chequered history. Thotmes III crossed its boundaries many centuries before the birth of Christ. Abyssinian princes followed, and planted their flag, and the armies of the caliphate had swept unresistingly across its plains. Of these conquerors, only the Arab left a permanent mark. In the passage of time Sennaar prospered, and became the centre of an empire that extended from Darfur on the west to Kassala on the east. But as the vigour of the rulers declined, their dominion shrank, and at the close of the eighteenth century, Sennaar was no more than a shadow of its old self. Anarchy prevailed everywhere, when Ismail began his long and dangerous march from Cairo, at the head of 4,000 infantry, a squadron of

irregular cavalry, and ten guns. He followed the banks of the Nile until the town of Dongola was reached. There, through an obstinate defence, the expedition was forced to leave its boats, and fight the rest of the way on foot. But Arab capacity for resistance was soon spent, and Ismail duly established himself at the junction of the White and Blue Niles. He wasted no time in resting the troops. Advancing up the Blue Nile, he summoned Sennaar to surrender. At Fazogli, farther south, disappointment awaited the leader. He had hoped to find gold in payable quantities, and there was none. The expedition also had outrun its strength, and its situation became precarious. Malaria was sapping the health of the troops, munitions and supplies were almost exhausted. But Mohammed Ali had foreseen these contingencies, and reinforcements under command of Ibrahim were already on the road. Ibrahim's timely arrival saved his brother, but introduced a fresh complication. Both claimed supreme command In vain the father endeavoured to compose the dispute, by allotting the White Nile to the elder, and the Blue Nile to the younger son. Neither was satisfied with the award, and in the end Ibrahim turned back. Ahmed Bey, the deftadar, a brother-in-law, was more amenable. He had recaptured Kordofan, and was on the point of entering Darfur, when news of Ismail's death, at Shendi, reached his camp. Ismail had gone there to raise money and men : but the melek or ruler of the province, furious with the humiliating terms imposed upon him, laid a trap for the Egyptian. His residence was set on fire, and the victim with his bodyguard perished miserably in the flames. It was a barbarous crime, that infringed the laws of hospitality, and the deftadar, marching to the scene, exacted a terrible penalty. It was long before the Sudan forgot the measure of Egyptian vengeance.

Rustem Bey, who replaced the deftadar, in 1824, and his successors, ruled according to their lights. They furnished Mohammed Ali with money and recruits : for the rest they did as they pleased. It was not a practice that conduced to good government, and it is therefore the more creditable that the earlier governors honourably endeavoured to bear in mind the interests of the Sudanese. But conditions did not favour the development of decent administration. The

viceroy soon lost interest in the Sudan, a country that had robbed him of a favourite son, and was becoming a drain upon his resources. In place of receiving tribute, Mohammed Ali was presently called upon to contribute to the cost of the administration : in place of obtaining recruits, he was pressed to send fellahin soldiers to the Sudan. The governors-general were tricked and deceived at every turn. Over each province a bey of Turkish or Circassian origin presided. His rule was one of self-interest, and the inhabitants understood no law but his word, knew no limit to misgovernment but his cupidity. They knew not where nor to whom to complain. The governor-general they never saw, his staff were in league with provincial authorities. Mohammed Ali himself delayed to visit the Sudan until 1838, when he spent a few weeks in Khartoum. He has left no record of his impressions of the journey, or of the Sudan : nor is it easy to conjecture why a man in his sixty-ninth year should undertake so long and exhausting an excursion. It could hardly have been from curiosity, still less from pleasure : whatever his object and reflections, he kept both secret. But the journey was not wholly in vain, and the firman of the 13th February, 1841, appointed him life governor of Nubia, Darfur, Kordofan and Sennaar.

Said, his youngest son, projected a more extensive tour ; but the barren aspect of the land and the misery of its inhabitants so discomposed that easy-going prince, that he got no further than Khartoum. His good intentions to introduce better administration vanished on return to Cairo, and though he condemned the barbarities of the slave trade, he took no steps to suppress it. The task was perhaps beyond his capacity, for in 1856 the trade had become a flourishing and profitable occupation. Razzias [1] were raiding every village of Equatorial Africa for ivory, and impressing the inhabitants as carriers. At the river bank, both ivory and porters were shipped, and sold in the markets of Khartoum. The Razzia leaders showed no mercy : they distinguished neither young from old, nor male from female. Every negro had a potential value, if he could be landed alive in Khar-

[1] The *Oxford Dictionary* defines razzia as follows—raid, plundering or slave collecting expedition, especially as carried out by African Mohammedans. Arabic—ghazwah (ghasw—to make war).

toum. But the march was often too hurried to expect more than a percentage of the captives to survive its pains, and unburied corpses marked the track of each razzia returning from the hunt. For a time these atrocities passed unnoticed: then Europe, stung by the words of explorers and missionaries, awoke to a knowledge of the evil. England in particular expressed her pained surprise, and invited the Khedive Ismail to discountenance this atrocious commerce. It is unlikely that the Khedive was aware of the measure of its horrors. He had not visited the Sudan, and governors-general now kept such information to themselves. He listened readily to the appeal, and begged Sir Samuel Baker, a traveller of established reputation,[1] to aid him. The choice was happy. Baker by temperament and inclination was an ideal man for the task.

It was high time that a Khedive gave some thought to the Sudan; for its administration, since the death of Mohammed Ali, had gone from bad to worse. The revenue now fell far short of the cost of maintaining the garrison and the officials, and the government only avoided bankruptcy by conniving at, and sharing in the profits of, the slave trade. Razzias came and went without question or comment, hiding neither their purpose nor their destination. The Sudan government assisted the leaders in many ways. They turned a blind eye upon the importation from Egypt of arms and ammunition required by the trade, and leased without shame the right of exploitation of wide areas. The lessee paid heavily for the privilege. From Ahmed El Agad, a notorious trader, the treasury demanded £3,000 in return for a monopoly of the White Nile basin: Zobehr Pasha paid even a larger sum. Both professed to trade for ivory, but as Baker perceived, the market in Khartoum could not exist on the sale of ivory alone. Nor did the boats that took razzias to the field of their operations, carry trade goods: their only cargo were the arms and supplies required by the hunters. The profits of this terrible commerce must have been very large: for Baker placed the yearly capture of slaves in Equatorial Africa at the figure of 50,000 head.

The middleman in Khartoum easily disposed of the human

[1] He had discovered Lake Albert Nyanza in March, 1863, thus completing the explorations of Speke and Grant.

flesh. He could count upon more than one market, and Egypt was his best. It was a country that still clung to the custom of domestic slavery. There were few families in easy circumstances even as late as 1860, that did not maintain one or two black slaves among their dependants, and the practice perhaps was less degrading, both to master and to man, than may be supposed. The slave became a member of the family, and so remained till the day of death. He was seldom ill-treated, he was still more rarely sold or exchanged. He became in fact part of a community, that looked upon slavery as a natural and permanent institution of life. If the Egyptian himself did not stoop to traffic in the business, he was uncritical of its barbarities, and fiercely resented any proposal of the government to liberate his bond-servants. Ismail understood that sentiment, and divined its strength. He hesitated to issue any decree, preferring the less showy but more practical measure of cutting off supplies at their source.[1] It was for this service that he required Sir Samuel Baker.

Baker's outlook was unpromising. It was difficult to outwit the slave hunter. For information he would have to depend upon the agents of a government, itself in league with razzias, and for his safety upon officers disinclined for adventure. He had, in short, to rely largely upon himself, and for consistent support from the Khedive, he would have accomplished nothing. Ismail's motive in fitting out the expedition has been frequently challenged, and his sincerity impugned. But there seems no reason to doubt his good faith : he was a man of humane and liberal ideals, unlikely to countenance commerce in slaves. Nor did Baker, hurrying to create for his employer a kingdom in Equatorial Africa, lose sight of the original aim of the expedition. Like the Khedive, he trusted to put a stop to the trade through a blockade of the Nile. That belief was unrealized. Razzias found another base in Darfur, and slave caravans went by

[1] Lord Kitchener on becoming governor-general of the Sudan in 1898 followed the same ideal. In a memorandum addressed in the winter of 1898–99 to British officers appointed mudirs and inspectors he wrote thus : " Slavery is not recognized in the Sudan, but as long as service is willingly rendered by servants to masters it is unnecessary to interfere in the conditions existing between them."

desert instead of by river. Baker would have liked to rout out and destroy the new nest, but Ismail's instructions confined him to the river, and the territory lying between the 5th parallel of latitude and the Equator. It was certainly enough for one man to undertake in view of the duties attached. Baker was first to suppress the slave trade, secondly to open the Lakes to navigation, and lastly to annex on behalf of the Khedive the river and territory south of Gondokoro. All this and more he did during his four years' stay in Equatorial Africa.[1] His instructions deserve to be read,[2] for upon them and the firman granted by the Porte to Mohammed Ali in 1841, Egyptians base their claim to sovereignty over the Sudan.

On the road to Khartoum Baker noted the uncultivated fields and motionless waterwheels, convincing, if silent, testimony of corrupt government: in his passage up the White Nile he witnessed further evidence of decay. A blight had settled upon the country and the administration. At Fashoda his suspicions of alliance between the agents of the government and the slave hunters were confirmed: the Turkish governor was hand in glove with the enemy. But that discovery was only one of many of its kind, and Baker left the culprits to face the physical difficulties of his task. Nature and man combined to dispute every mile of the advance. The sudd, a mass of floating vegetation, blocked

[1] From 1st April, 1869, to 31st March, 1873.

[2] "We, Ismail of Egypt, considering the savage condition of the tribes which inhabit the Nile Basin, considering that neither Government nor laws nor society exists in those countries: Considering that humanity enforces the suppression of slave hunters who occupy those countries in great numbers: Considering that the establishment of legitimate commerce throughout these countries will be a great stride forward towards future civilization, and will result in the opening of steam navigation of the great Equatorial Lakes of Central Africa, and in the establishment of a permanent Government, We have decreed:

"An Expedition is organized to subdue to Our authority the countries situated to the South of Gondokoro, to suppress the slave-trade, to introduce a system of regular commerce, to open to navigation the great lakes of the Equator, and to establish a chain of military stations and depots distant at intervals of three days' march, throughout Central Africa with Gondokoro as the base of operations."

the river, and the steamers were forced to proceed up a subsidiary channel. That passage was also obstructed, and on more than one occasion the leader seriously contemplated returning to Khartoum. Enthusiasm vanished, and discipline wore thin: only an occasional brush with hostile tribes raised the spirits of the escort.[1] There was continual anxiety over supplies of food. It was unreasonable that the expedition should lack meat: for the country abounded in stock, and the leader was prepared to pay liberally for what he required. But the inhabitants mistook the party for a new razzia, and Baker had to seize the cattle by force. These raids led to reprisals and to attacks upon the camp, and the expedition did not reach Gondokoro until the 26th May, 1871. On that day Baker formally proclaimed Gondokoro and all territory between it and the Lakes, to form part of the Khedive's dominions. His mission was now ended. He had accomplished much within a few months. He had annexed a kingdom; he had established a chain of posts throughout its length, and he had driven the razzias off the Nile. Ismail's intuition had not been at fault. From that period commerce in slaves began to decline.

Gordon took up Baker's work. He had made the acquaintance of Nubar Pasha in Constantinople: a chance meeting, that changed the current of the Englishman's life. He was offered Baker's succession, and started for Egypt at once. He reached Khartoum in March, 1874, Gondokoro a month later. There he found extreme confusion. All forms of organized government had disappeared. The defences built by Baker had fallen into disrepair, stations had been abandoned and razzias were again passing freely up and down the Nile. Gordon's first business was to re-establish order in the administration, his second to restore discipline in the garrisons,[2] and his third to harry the slave hunter.

[1] Two battalions of infantry, one of black troops, one of Egyptian, and two batteries of artillery. The black unit did admirable work. The Egyptian battalion was less reliable: for the rank and file consisted of men convicted of serious crime, and transported to the Sudan.

[2] The total number of troops south of Fashoda had dwindled to 500. Egypt had already forgotten their existence. Their clothing had never been renewed, their pay was many months in arrears. Little wonder if, in these circumstances, they had lost their spirit.

By proclaiming ivory to be a government monopoly, he deprived razzias of their solitary excuse for trading in the basin of the White Nile. But he could not overcome so easily his other difficulties.[1] Blackwater fever took toll of the European staff: native advisers proved unreliable. Yet, despite these afflictions, he went ahead, and in the spring of 1876 he stood on the shores of Lake Albert Nyanza. It was an exhilarating conclusion to the work of two years. But Gordon drank no cup to its dregs. He left to Gessi, his lieutenant, the honour of being the first to fly the Khedive's standard in equatorial waters, and he himself returned to Gondokoro. There he pondered about the future. Illusion was passing away, and he saw more clearly now the practical difficulty of suppressing the slave trade.[2] He was uncertain also whether the possession of the lakes would advantage Egypt. Communication between them and Khartoum was subject to frequent interruption. Above Gondokoro, a series of cataracts and rapids obstructed navigation: down-stream the sudd was no less formidable an impediment. At Baker's instance, the government had cleared a passage for river craft, but Gordon at this period had learnt enough about the Sudan to be less confident of the future. His mind turned to the plan of an alternative route from the Indian ocean across Africa, with Mombasa as the starting-point and Gondokoro the terminus. With such fancies as these Gordon played, until, worn out in mind and body, he returned to England.

He landed at Southampton in December, 1876; but within a few weeks he was back again in Africa as governor-general of the Sudan. Pushed by foreign opinion, Ismail had yielded against his judgment, and was contemplating the abolition of slavery throughout his dominions. It was a moment when the Khedive was full of anxiety. Dark clouds were gathering in the offing, and ruin impending. He

[1] Chapter V, *Gordon*, by General Sir W. F. Butler. ("Men of Action" Series, Macmillan, London, 1889.)

[2] Like Baker, he suffered from the disloyalty of subordinates. Thus on the 18th November, 1874, he wrote in a letter (unpublished) to his friend, Lieut.-General Stanton, H.B.M. consul-general in Cairo, thus: "The day I left Sobat, my own Mudir let 1,600 slaves pass for £350."

had been badly worsted in Abyssinia,[1] his credit in Europe had come to an end, and the Sudan hung like a millstone round his neck. Gordon was his last hope. Like a whirlwind the new governor-general swept up and down the Nile. His insatiable passion for justice, his fierce condemnation of corruption, startled the people, and terrified the army of officials. By precept and exhortation, Gordon strove to inspire the administration with new ideals. The goal he sought was perhaps unattainable. No single individual can hope to purify a whole government, or awake a responsive echo in the minds of incompetent and listless subordinates, and Gordon failed. Darfur was already stirring with revolt. Its Arab population that had battened upon the slave trade, was now reduced to beggary. They could no longer pay the tribute, they were hardly able to support existence. The government were hard pushed to preserve their authority. Garrisons were inadequate to suppress insurrection, munitions scarce, the rank and file indifferently trained, and their officers without military knowledge. Unhappily, in the year 1877, Egypt was not in a position to repair this state of things. At the bidding of Turkey, the flower of her army had gone to Constantinople ; and until Czar and Sultan composed their quarrel, there was no prospect of strengthening the military forces of the Sudan.

At this point Gordon was summoned to Cairo. Ismail acknowledging at last his financial embarrassment, had consented to the appointment of a commission of investigation, and he invited the governor-general of the Sudan to become the chairman. It was a singular choice. Gordon had no experience of public finance, or knowledge of its perplexities. But the Khedive was astute enough when his own interests were concerned, and he trusted to Gordon's sense of loyalty to keep the commission from suggesting reforms inconvenient and displeasing to the Sovereign. The manœuvre did not succeed. Great Britain and France making com-

[1] The campaign had ended in crushing disaster for Egypt. She left guns and troops to mark the triumph of the enemy. It was a costly adventure, exhausting the £4,000,000 that Ismail had received from England in exchange for his shares in the Suez Canal. (See page 128, *La Nouvelle Egypte*, Librairie Universelle, Paris, 1905, by A. B. De Guerville.)

mon cause, were determined upon a thorough inquiry, and Gordon was instructed to return to his post. It might have been better for the Sudan, had another, more versed in the arts of administration taken his place. The year 1878 opened in gloom. Gessi, now governor of the Bahr El Ghazal, was in the field against Suliman, son of Zobehr Pasha. Baker had met and distrusted the father ; Gordon more impulsive conceived the idea of recognizing Zobehr as a vassal of the Khedive. Nothing came of the project, and Gessi was urged to bring Suliman to justice. The campaign ended tragically for the rebel. He was taken prisoner, and shot by sentence of a drumhead court-martial. Painfully but dutifully, Gordon held on for a few more months ; then finding the Egyptian government unable or unwilling to assist him, he resigned. It is impertinent perhaps to speak disparagingly of the work of a man, inspired like Gordon by lofty and unselfish motives ; but the historian, who desires to provide a reader with a faithful picture of the times, cannot allow such considerations to influence his judgment. Let it then be frankly said that nature had not fitted Gordon for the humdrum business of administration. His fancy was frequently responsible for hasty and mistaken generalizations, his generous mind for rash and imprudent promises. The feverish activity that drove him from one province to another without pause for rest or reflection, permitted no study of the fundamental needs and grievances of the Sudan. Here and there he repaired an injustice, and punished a breach of the law : but in his hurry he overlooked the elemental causes of the prevailing discontent. The abolition of slavery was one, the inefficiency of the government another. It was Gordon's ambition to be regarded as the father of a people, an ideal noble but impracticable in a country of a million square miles. He would have done better to inaugurate his term of office by drastic reform of the central administration in Khartoum. It was in a deplorable state. Taxes were outrageously high, and the agents of a merciless government wrung from the cultivator his last piastre.[1] Justice was corrupt, the prisons were crowded,

[1] Despite exaction, money was not forthcoming. Gordon writing to Stanton on the 8th October, 1878, says, "I have had hard work with the finance. Expenses exceed revenue by £97,000, and we

and famine threatened the land.[1] The officials themselves were no better off. Their pay was always in arrear, and they became corrupt in order to live. It was an intolerable and humiliating state of affairs, which Egypt at this moment had no power to amend. Disaffection was brewing in Cairo as in Khartoum.

In the correspondence exchanged between the two capitals, there is no hint that either government suspected the approach of crisis in the Sudan. Yet the facts were plain enough, and the proper policy to pursue was equally obvious. The Sudan had outstripped its resources, and there was no other choice but to limit its responsibilities. It was a measure disagreeable but inevitable, and it is a little surprising that Gordon himself did not perceive that straitened means and weakened garrisons made abandonment of Darfur and the equatorial provinces imperative. But neither he nor his immediate successor pressed that view upon Cairo, and the Sudan drifted steadily towards disaster.

Hardly had Gordon relinquished his appointment than rumour was busy about the teaching of an Arab, half-hermit half-saint, who had taken up his abode on Abba, an island of the White Nile. He was Mohammed Ahmed, better known as the Mahdi. The curious flocked to visit this recluse. The Arabs of Kordofan troubled little about the niceties of Islam, and Mohammed Ahmed's denunciation of iniquitous government appealed more closely to them. Encouraged by an increasing number of adherents, he was soon advising all true believers to pay no more taxes to Egyptian authority. It was counsel which fell upon sympathetic ears, and his disciples eagerly embraced this agreeable doctrine. They hailed Mohammed Ahmed as a divine leader, they placed their lives at his disposal, and gave him their women to wife. Adulation turned the preacher's head. In the spring of 1881, he proclaimed himself to be the Mahdi, a spiritual and temporal leader, and promised that the world would pre-

owe £327,000." Lord Cromer in *Modern Egypt* states the financial situation of the Sudan in 1882 thus : Expenditure £610,000 ; revenue £510,000. But he warns the reader to be cautious of accepting these figures as a correct statement of the accounts. The government kept no proper books, made no effort to audit them. In Cromer's belief, the revenue was grossly exaggerated.

[1] Lieut.-Colonel J. H. Stewart's report (*Egypt No. 1, 1883*).

sently acknowledge the claim. No Arab challenged that pretension, until the Mahdi proclaimed a community of worldly wealth. Then many of his followers took alarm, refusing their consent to such pernicious teaching. Mohammed Ahmed had gone too far. The nomad has enough to do to provide means of existence for himself and his family, and cannot share his possessions with a stranger. So disciples melted away, until only the Baggara tribe stayed faithful to the Mahdi.

Raouf Bey, who succeeded Gordon, was little likely to concern himself about the preaching of an insignificant Arab. He was an indolent officer, who had risen through seniority alone. His record of service was undistinguished, and Sir Samuel Baker, under whom he served, formed an unfavourable opinion of his capacity. It was unfortunate that a Turk of this type should be in control of the Sudan at this critical point of its fortunes. Raouf avoided business lest it should involve decision, and disliked change lest it brought about fresh responsibility. Though apparently kept informed of all that passed on Abba island, he allowed sedition to be hatched under his nose, and not until Mohammed Ahmed professed himself to be the Mahdi did he interfere. Even then his action was undecided and hesitating. In place of descending swiftly upon the island and carrying off its occupant, he invited the hermit to discuss with him in Khartoum Islamic doctrine. But the trap was too obvious, and Mohammed Ahmed declined to go without the promise of a safe conduct. That insolent reply stirred Raouf to action. Giving Abu Seoud, a slave-dealer, a couple of hundred irregular troops, he bade him bring back the Mahdi alive or dead. The party was strong enough to execute the commission; but Abu Seoud, marching without precaution, walked into an ambush and was cut to pieces. It was an act of defiance, of which the victor knew the consequences. He slipped across the river and established his camp in southern Kordofan. From that point of safety he announced his intention to expel Egyptians from the Sudan, to march against the Turk, and to convert the world to Islam. It was an ambitious programme.

Meanwhile Raouf anxious to capture the rebel, before news of the disaster to Abu Seoud's party reached Cairo, sent

Mohammed Pasha Said, a reliable officer with a battalion of regular troops to Abba island. The force was too late. The nest was empty, and the indolent governor-general stayed satisfied with that negative success. He was convinced that the hand of every inhabitant of the Sudan thenceforth would be against the Mahdi, and that the outlaw could not escape. Thirst would drive him to the river, lack of food to inhabited villages, and he must therefore surrender or perish. Such was Raouf's comfortable but mistaken belief, when fresh news gave a disturbing turn to his reflection. The Mahdi's situation was less unpromising than the government believed. His camp at Jebel Gedir was now crowded with adherents, who spoke of their leader's flight from the Blue Nile as a second hegira, of his defeat of Abu Seoud as a victory, and of his sayings as the inspiration of the Almighty. But the attack that the Mahdi confidently awaited, did not mature. The garrisons of Fashoda and El Obeid had been ordered to watch the movements of the rebel, and report his death; they were not instructed to take the field, nor did they propose to do so. The Mahdi, therefore, was left with the initiative. He made excellent use of the advantage. Turning to the south, he enticed Reshid Bey, the governor of Fashoda, to leave his entrenchments. It was an unfortunate day for the Sudan. The Egyptian troops, outnumbered, and overpowered with thirst, broke before the Arab charge. Fashoda surrendered, and the Mahdi, elated by success, sent a lieutenant to occupy Sennaar while he himself marched against a relieving column from Khartoum under Yusef Pasha Shellali. On the 9th December, 1881, he was in touch with the enemy, and adopting his favourite device of ambush, he routed the column. The history of that winter is painful reading. The Sudan government could claim no success, and the discouraged garrison of El Obeid took refuge behind hastily thrown up earthworks. A relieving column under Ali Bey Lutfi met with defeat, and it was clear that El Obeid was doomed. Egyptian strategy and tactics were equally faulty. No endeavour was made to co-ordinate scattered units, no attempt was made to train the troops in desert warfare. Confusion reigned in the military as well as in the civil administration of the Sudan.

In the summer of 1882 Raouf was recalled, and Abdel

Pasha Kadir came in his place. A resolute and active soldier, Abdel Kadir would have made short work of Mohammed Ahmed, had he been in control a few months earlier. But the mischief was done. The Arabs were then in possession of Sennaar and Fashoda, and had overrun Darfur and Kordofan. Only the towns of Bara and Dara in Darfur, and El Obeid in Kordofan still held out, beleaguered. The Mahdi was in front of El Obeid, the Emirs Maddibu and Wad En Nedjumi had isolated Bara and Dara. Taking stock of the melancholy situation, Abdel Kadir reported to Cairo that he could relieve Kordofan and Darfur, if he were reinforced by 15,000 troops: in the alternative he proposed to retire upon Berber. The message fell like a thunderbolt upon Egyptian ministers. They were unprepared for the news, and sought assistance from Her Majesty's government.

It was not forthcoming. Great Britain in the winter of 1882–83 was endeavouring to limit her liabilities in Egypt, not to increase them, and she had no intention of adventuring into the Sudan. She declined therefore to lend either her money or troops,[1] and she counselled Egypt to consider the abandonment of the Sudan. Meanwhile the Mahdi continued to hammer at El Obeid. Its commander, Ali Bey Sherif, put up a stout resistance, but famine [2] finally drove him to capitulate. The success was welcome enough to the Mahdi. It vindicated his claim to leadership, and he obtained the munitions and money [3] of which he was so badly in want. Bara, the capital of Darfur, surrendered on learning the news of the fall of El Obeid, and only the gallant Slatin in Dara kept the Egyptian flag flying in the western Sudan.[4]

[1] Her Majesty's government ordered Lieut.-Colonel D. H. Stewart of the 11th Hussars to report upon the situation in the Sudan. This officer had been an inspector of Turkish gendarmerie under Sir Charles Wilson in Asia Minor, and when the latter was directed to join the Egyptian expedition of 1882 as chief political officer, Stewart went as Wilson's first assistant.

[2] The garrison were on quarter rations for many months. Food for the civilian population was almost unprocurable in the last days of the siege. An oke of meat (2¾lbs.) fetched nearly £5.

[3] Six thousand rifles, five field guns, and £15,000 in gold.

[4] Chapter IX, *Fire and Sword in the Sudan*, by Rudolf Slatin Pasha (Edward Arnold: London, 1896).

The Khedivial government had taken no steps to reinforce the troops in the Sudan, until Abdel Kadir's ultimatum. Then ministers began to bestir themselves. The situation was undoubtedly perplexing. On the one hand Great Britain refused to help, on the other Egypt had lost control over her own army. At one moment Sherif, the prime minister, thought of raising a foreign legion ; at the next of inviting the Porte to garrison Suakin. But neither project was really practicable. Egypt could not afford the luxury of a mercenary army, nor Turkey support the cost of an overseas expedition. In the dilemma ministers fell back upon traditional procedure. Into the provinces went their recruiting agents with orders to drive the fellahin into the barracks. Thus Colonel Hicks [1] reaching Khartoum on the 4th March, 1883, to take command, found a crowd of raw conscripts, who had undergone no military instruction. With this travesty of an army, he was expected to recapture the Sudan. Hicks did his best to train the men, and by the early summer marched to the relief of Sennaar. The affair was successful, and he pressed for reinforcements and money. He might have saved his breath : he got neither one nor the other. But it taught Hicks the measure of the Khedivial Government, and he boldly counselled the abandonment of all territory, except the provinces of Dongola, Sennaar and Kassala. The advice was little likely to find favour. Abdel Kadir had been recalled in disgrace for expressing it, and Hicks might have shared the same fate, had the prime minister known where to look for a successor. The Englishman's appeal remained unanswered, and Hicks at the head of 9,000 troops left Khartoum on the 27th September, 1883, to march against the Mahdi. Misfortune dogged the column, once it forsook the security of the river. It wandered from the track, it missed some watering places, found others dry. But on the 2nd November Hicks was in touch with the enemy : then misled by his patrols, he walked into an ambush. The defeat foreshadowed the investment of Khartoum.

Gordon's arrival in Egypt in January, 1884, has already been noted ; [2] his journey up the Nile resembled a royal

[1] A retired officer of the Indian army, who had served with credit in the Abyssinian and Afghanistan campaigns.

[2] Chapter VI.

progress: at every halting place he was enthusiastically welcomed. He promised reward to the loyal, he threatened punishment to the unfaithful. At Berber he issued his first proclamation; in Khartoum others. He declared war upon oppression,[1] he announced the independence of the Sudan, and he formally withdrew all restrictions upon the practice of domestic slavery.[2] That concession was immensely popular in the Sudan: less so in England, where its necessity was misunderstood. But in the end it cost Gordon dearly: for the cabinet taking alarm, obstinately refused to sanction the employment of Zobehr, or of any Arab connected with the slave trade. But Gordon did not stop at words. He burnt the tax registers, he destroyed the whips and other instruments of torture, and he emptied the prisons of their inmates. His first idea was to compromise with the enemy. He opened communications with the Mahdi, he sent him handsome presents, and offered generous terms of peace. But the gifts were returned, and to the offers of friendship Mohammed Ahmed insolently advised his enemy to become a Moslem, or depart from the Sudan. Gordon deeply incensed, parleyed no more with the rebel. He set to work to repair the defences of Khartoum, and he cancelled the departure of Egyptian units placed under order to proceed to Cairo. In short he prepared for war.

No doubt the situation during the first two months of the new year had developed for the worse, and early in March, 1884, authority in Cairo was gravely uncertain whether evacuation was still possible. There was no anxiety about the safety of Khartoum, or about Gordon's capacity to hold out for many months to come. But evacuation was another matter. The Nile was falling fast, and passage over

[1] As earnest of his intentions, he had summarily fined Hussein Pasha, governor of Berber, £75 for beating a sheikh, and dismissed Mustapha Pasha Yawar, governor of Dongola, on suspicion of favouring the cause of the Mahdi. But the decision was overruled, and Nubar re-instated Yawar.

[2] This proclamation ran as follows: "Knowing your regret at the severe measures taken by the government for the suppression of the slave trade, and punishment of all concerned in it according to conventions and decrees, I confer upon you these rights, that henceforth none shall interfere with your property. Whosoever has slaves, shall have full right to their services, and full control over them."

the cataracts except for lightly laden boats, had become difficult. More ominous still, the Berber-Suakin road was said to be unsafe. Raiders were intercepting trading caravans, and Osman Digna had persuaded the tribes of the eastern Sudan to join the Mahdi. Sinkat and Tokar were closely besieged : Suakin might be in similar plight any day. The Khedivial government, aroused by the threat, had sent Valentine Baker, then commanding the Egyptian gendarmerie, to Suakin. It was a short but disastrous campaign for Egyptian arms. At Suakin, Baker embarked his little force for Trinkitat, and on the 4th February, met Osman Digna at El Teb. He was completely routed : the Egyptian troops broke their ranks, turned and fled, and the garrison of Sinkat were left to their fate. Her Majesty's government felt compelled to intervene. Sinkat was lost, but Tokar was still holding out. British troops, therefore, were hastily collected, and landed at Trinkitat.[1] Sir Gerald Graham, the commander, drove Osman Digna off the field at Tamai, but the victory bore no fruit. Tokar had fallen, and Graham with his force was recalled.

Meanwhile the Mahdi had proclaimed his intention to march upon Khartoum, and the inhabitants of Berber and Dongola interpreted the message as a signal to join him. Khartoum was thus cut off from all sides, and the fate of the Sudan now rested upon the decision of Her Majesty's government. Gordon endeavoured to awake the cabinet to his peril. Repeatedly he urged the despatch of a company or two of British troops up the Nile to encourage the defenders of Khartoum, or of a Turkish force to Suakin to keep open the Berber road. There was little chance of either proposal finding acceptance. Military authority disapproved of the first, public opinion of the second. None the less the belief that some endeavour must be made to rescue Gordon, was slowly forming in England, and would have taken definite shape earlier, had military authority been able to agree upon the best line of approach to Khartoum. General Stephenson, commanding in Cairo, favoured the Suakin-Berber road ; Lord Wolseley, the military adviser of the cabinet, the Nile route. The second had his way : but valuable time mean-

[1] Sir Gerald Graham had with him two weak infantry and one cavalry brigades, and eight guns.

while had been lost.[1] The relief force only reached Dongola on the 3rd November, and there learnt the painful news that Khartoum could not hold out for more than six weeks. Wolseley altered his plan, and ordered Sir Herbert Stewart and the Camel Corps to march across the desert between Korti and Metemma. But the column could not start before the 16th of December, and 280 miles separated Khartoum from the relieving force.

Throughout the autumn, Gordon had kept the enemy at bay : now famine and disease had sapped his capacity of resistance. It was a matter of difficulty to line the perimeter : to provide reserves was impracticable. The enemy were well informed of the straits of the defence, and the siege was pressed. The White Nile, which hitherto had acted as a natural defence on the west, had fallen, and left a gap that the garrison weakened by desertion could not cover. But the indomitable Gordon had no thought of surrender. Remorselessly he drove the exhausted troops to their allotted stations, while from the roof of the palace he scanned the north for sign of the promised relief. His watch was in vain ; Stewart hampered by transport difficulties did not leave Jakdul wells until the 14th January, and Sir Charles Wilson did not sight Khartoum until a fortnight later. But the Egyptian flag no longer floated over the palace of the governor-general. Gordon had been dead forty-eight hours, and the Mahdi was master of the town.

It is a dismal page of history, an enterprise begotten in hesitation and terminating in tragedy. The British cabinet had delayed too long, and had altered their mind too frequently. Gordon should have started for the Sudan six weeks earlier, or not at all. Evacuation, possible in December, 1883, was probably impracticable in the following March. But Cromer stood in the way, and Mr. Gladstone hesitated to force his own point of view. Nor would the prime minister listen to the warning of his military advisers,

[1] Her Majesty's ministers were as much to blame as the soldiers. They refused to sanction the purchase of river craft until July. Thus the first convoy of boats only left the second cataract, a few miles north of Wadi Halfa, on the 1st November. "The boat scheme thus caused a delay of more than two months, which could never be recovered." (Watson's *Life of Major-General Sir Charles Wilson*, Chapter XIV.)

or to the voice of public opinion, until it was too late. There were other causes that contributed no doubt to failure. Gordon perhaps was not an ideal officer to carry out a policy of surrender, and the cabinet might have found another agent better suited by temperament to carry out that repugnant task. Cromer has made little secret of his own opinion on the point. He is doubtful if Gordon obeyed the letter of his instructions: he is certain that he did not follow their spirit. By refusing to leave Khartoum until he had relieved Equatoria, Gordon committed Great Britain to a costly expedition inconsistent with her policy. Such was his final judgment.[1] It is a little harsh. No doubt Gordon did plan to crush the Mahdi, and did use Emin's situation in the south to cover that design. None the less the evacuation of troops and civilians from Khartoum from the spring of 1884 onwards, was physically impossible.

For some weeks the fate of the Sudan hung in the balance, until seizing upon reported Russian penetration into Central Asia as an excuse, the cabinet ordered a general retirement upon Wadi Halfa. By midsummer, 1885, the movement was completed. The Egyptian army garrisoned the frontier: behind in support at Assuan was a British field force. The commander of the army of occupation in Egypt held supreme control. An incursion by Osman Digna into the province of Kassala was his first anxiety, and reports indicated the straits of the Egyptian garrison. Perplexed and helpless, Nubar Pasha, the prime minister, once again besought England to come to the rescue. But Her Majesty's government had had enough of the Sudan, and Kassala was left to the mercy of the enemy. There was nothing now left to Egypt, but the town of Suakin and the province of Equatoria, where Emin still held out.[2]

[1] In *Modern Egypt* he has paid a generous tribute to Gordon's personality.

[2] Emin, or Edward Schnitzer, a Prussian Jew, doctor of medicine by profession, botanist and naturalist by inclination, was then about 45 years of age. Public opinion in Europe was profoundly stirred at the thought of Emin's isolation in Central Africa, and Stanley was sent to effect his rescue. It was the last thing that Emin wished, and when after a laborious journey Stanley found the Prussian, the latter refused to leave Equatoria. He went in the end, but against his will and judgment.

Death removed Mohammed Ahmed at the hour of his triumph, and Abdullahi, styling himself the Khalifa, filled the Mahdi's place. His position was less secure, and many of the emirs disputed his pretensions. But Wad En Nedjumi was loyal to his cause. This indefatigable Arab had followed the footsteps of the retiring British forces, and the Egyptian troops were hardly in position at Wadi Halfa, before he was raiding their line. Throughout the closing months of 1885, the two forces were in contact. But the new frontier army was a very different body of men from the conscripts who fought under Arabi and Hicks. At Ambigol and at Kosha Wad En Nedjumi gained some trifling success: but these early triumphs were not repeated, and at Ginniss, midway between Wadi Halfa and the town of Dongola, on the 30th December, 1885, he met with severe defeat. But despite this unexpected check, he still clung to the dream of invading Egypt. It was the promised land, the prize which the Mahdi had dangled before the eyes of his emirs, and Wad En Nedjumi was eager to set foot on its soil. He went to Omdurman to take counsel with the Khalifa. Nearly a year sped by in fruitless talk. The Khalifa himself was unwilling to leave the comfortable security of the town, or endanger his prestige in an uncertain campaign. He would neither lead an army into Egypt, nor assist a lieutenant to do so. Disappointed but still determined, Wad En Nedjumi returned to Dongola, and summoned the tribes to his standard. By June, 1889, he had completed his simple preparations, and was ready to march. News of the advance had been communicated to Cairo, and troops were hurried up to Assuan. General Grenfell assumed command, and ordered Wodehouse with the frontier force to intercept the invaders. At Argin, on the 2nd July, 1889, that officer established contact with the enemy, and dealt him a heavy blow. In broken formation, encumbered with wounded, and embarrassed by women and children, Wad En Nedjumi struggled on, ignorant that his star had set. To Grenfell's message counselling submission, he returned a defiant answer, and in company with his emirs perished on the field of Toski the 3rd August, 1889. It was the Moscow of Mahdism. Again the river was open to Khartoum.

But the opportunity went by. Egypt was not yet in a

position to make a forward movement, nor was Great Britain desirous of assisting her at that moment. The remnant of Wad En Nedjumi's army slunk back to Dongola : but their spirit was broken, and their ardour for battle had vanished. Without a leader, they were as a flock of sheep without a shepherd. The Khalifa sat immovable in Omdurman. His personal ascendency in the Sudan was insecure. The battle of Toski had removed from his path one formidable Emir, and Abdullah feared to raise a second potential rival to his supremacy. So he took no step to avenge the death of Wad En Nedjumi or to encourage the tribesmen of Dongola to renew the campaign. In Cairo, Cromer also was holding his hand. He had never thought of the Sudan as permanently abandoned, but he was still unable to advise its re-conquest. Grenfell's victory indicated the turn of the tide, but Egypt had not yet completed her period of recuperation. So officers and men resumed their old position on the frontier, impatiently awaiting the hour of advance. It came eventually through accident. Italy, inspired with ambition to become an African Power, had fallen out with Abyssinia, and suffered severe reverse. In some alarm lest the Khalifa seizing the opportunity should advance upon Kassala,[1] the Italian government begged London to make a diversion on the Nile. It was an appeal difficult to resist. During the first years of the occupation of Egypt, Italy had consistently supported Great Britain, and in gratitude Her Majesty's government were bound to come to the assistance of their friend. It presented also a convenient excuse to take a step that would open the road to the recovery of the Sudan. Public opinion was being steadily educated to that point. Cabinet ministers had become ashamed to admit that the Sudan still remained under the hand of a savage and ignorant Arab, and the development of irrigation was arrested so long as the Khalifa barred the road to the sources of the Nile. It had become an intolerable situation. The

[1] By virtue of a Protocol dated 15th April, 1891, Italy had acquired possession of Massawa and the right of occupying Kassala until the Egyptian government required the return of the province. She hoisted her flag over Kassala on the 17th July, 1894. Abyssinia took umbrage at the act, and prepared for war. It may be added that the Egyptian government used their option on the 18th September, 1897, and the Italians evacuated Kassala.

Sudan was still, as Riaz Pasha once said of it, *un trou inconnu*, but its value to Egypt was beginning to be understood.[1] None the less it was clear that Her Majesty's government were about to embark upon a campaign that might prove a costly affair to them as well as Egypt. Despite the labours of Wood, Grenfell and Kitchener, the Egyptian army was not yet in a position to overthrow the Khalifa by its own efforts. Its units were too few, and deficient also in many of the adjuncts required by an army in the field. There had never been sufficient money to meet all the needs of Egypt, and military estimates suffered in common with estimates of other administrative services. Mindful of the fate of Hicks and of Gordon the British cabinet were resolved to have no more misadventures. They recognized that the Sudan could not be reconquered without the assistance of British troops, and having counted the cost, they provided the men and guns.

Of the campaign that followed, it is only necessary here to speak of the leading incidents. Concentrating on the 27th March, 1896, at Akasha, 100 miles south of Wadi Halfa, the Anglo-Egyptian force, after a tame skirmish at Firka, entered the town of Dongola in September. There General Kitchener, the Sirdar, awaited authority to continue his march. It was not at first forthcoming. Her Majesty's government were indisposed to permit the Anglo-Egyptian arms to press their success further for the moment: the campaign had fulfilled a duty towards Italy, and furnished evidence of the decay of Mahdism in the northern Sudan. They called therefore a halt, until disquieting reports of the incursion of a French military mission from the West coast of Africa into the basin of the White Nile, persuaded them to alter that decision. Great Britain at first had stoutly refused to credit the rumour: but since France declined to satisfy diplomatic curiosity upon the point, ministers stood upon their guard. Khartoum obviously was the key of the situ-

[1] Gordon's estimate of the value of the Sudan is interesting. Writing in the spring of 1884 from Khartoum, he says, "the Sudan is a useless possession, ever was so, ever will be," nor was he alone then in that opinion, for Colonel Stewart confirmed it adding: "I quite agree with General Gordon that the Sudan is an expensive and useless possession." (*Egypt No. 1, 1904.*)

ation, and Great Britain determined that the Anglo-Egyptian forces should be first in the town. Meanwhile Cromer and Kitchener were anxiously reflecting how to transport there the guns and men. The Nile and the Suakin-Berber road were considered, and discarded as lines of march. Each possessed advantages, but round each lingered painful memories of failure. It was then that Kitchener's mind took one of its flights of fancy. He conceived the idea of laying a line of railway from Wadi Halfa to Khartoum. The plan did not find favour with all. But men of the stamp of Cromer and Kitchener are not easily turned from their purpose. Difficulties stimulate their imagination, and opposition spurs them to achievement. *Possunt quia posse videntur*, and unmoved by criticism, the two men methodically pursued their plan. The line was duly laid as far as Abu Hamed, and after a sharp skirmish on the 6th September, 1897, the Anglo-Egyptian force entered that village. A month later Berber capitulated, and Kitchener prepared to meet the Khalifa's main assault. It was delivered on the Atbara river on the 8th April of the following year, and reinforced by fresh British units, the Sirdar continued the advance. On the 2nd September, the battle of Omdurman was fought, and the Khalifa fled into Kordofan.[1]

Before the sound of firing died down, Great Britain became aware that France had anticipated her on the White Nile. The news was not unexpected, and early in August Kitchener had been instructed on reaching Khartoum, to despatch gunboats up each branch of the Nile to ascertain information about the presence of a French or Abyssinian mission in the Sudan. Kitchener took the initiative on the White Nile, and at Fashoda he found Marchand with a handful of Senegalese infantry.[2] The Frenchman might well be proud of his exploit. He had left Brazzaville on the West coast on the 22nd July, 1896, and after an arduous march of nearly 3,000 miles reached the Nile two years later. He was at once called upon to defend himself. Learning of the arrival of Europeans, the Khalifa sent an emir to expel them.

[1] He was trapped at Gedid on the 26th November, 1899, and died on the field of battle.

[2] Eight officers and twelve non-commissioned officers, all French; 200 Senegalese infantry, two steamers and three aluminium barges.

But Marchand was too strong, and the attack was beaten off. So far, therefore, his mission had been successful: but disappointment now awaited him. He could hear no news of the Abyssinian party that he had been led to expect would meet him on the Sobat river, and a patrol returned with the disquieting news that the Abyssinians, having planted their flag at El Nasser, had immediately retired. Thus Marchand was left to meet the crisis alone.

The Marchand episode forms part of an undignified scramble among the Powers of Europe for territory in central Africa. For half a generation, Great Britain, France, Germany and Belgium had wrangled and bargained with one another for the possession of this unexplored region, without knowledge of its value and without regard to the wishes of its inhabitants. From Brazzaville on the Atlantic to Zanzibar on the Indian Ocean, there ran, fifty years ago, a broad strip of country at the disposal of any Power sufficiently covetous of colonial empire to incur the toil and cost of occupying and developing its resources. Singularly enough, in light of later history, Germany began the struggle. She formed her East African Company in 1885, and Great Britain imitated the example two or three years later. The two corporations began modestly enough: but trade pushed ahead of the flag, and indulged in more ambitious conceptions. Under pretext of relieving Emin, Carl Peters succeeded in persuading the king of Uganda to accept a German protectorate. It was an adroit manœuvre, but unhappily for the sponsor, accomplished too late. Accident alone saved British interests in this region. Before news of Peters' success reached Berlin, the two Powers had signed a convention,[1] that conceded to Great Britain as a sphere of influence the basin of the White Nile. Later the agreement was attacked on the score that no Power but Turkey possessed the right to assign territory within the Sudan, and France indignantly declined to be bound by it.

Ten years earlier the exploration of the Congo by Cameron and Stanley had excited general interest in Europe, and that remarkable man Leopold II of Belgium was among the first

[1] 1st July, 1890. Bismarck defending his share of it, said that England's friendship was worth all East Africa. Germany, it may be noted, did not do so badly. She acquired Heligoland.

to be impressed with the commercial possibilities of Africa. He began by professing a generous interest in the inhabitants of a continent sunk in barbarism, he ended by establishing a rigorous control over their lives and labour, to which the history of colonial exploitation offers no parallel. Not without reason his sincerity has been impeached, and his conduct attacked. His creation of the International geographical association of Brussels in 1873, gave rise to suspicion : a suspicion that its development into a trading company justified. But Leopold's ambition had been whetted. In 1884 he persuaded the Powers to consent to the transformation of the company into the Independent State of the Congo, and a year later to his appointment as its sovereign. Still he was not satisfied, and he aimed also at establishing his sovereignty over the upper basin of the White Nile. It was a wish unlikely to be gratified, and Great Britain coldly reminded the king that this territory formed part of her own sphere of influence. Leopold then addressed himself to France, urging the Republic to press for inquiry into European claims of this type ; but France was suspicious, and Leopold began fresh negotiation with Great Britain. He was now more modest, and on the 12th May, 1894, Her Majesty's government leased to him for life a strip of territory lying between the thirtieth degree of longitude and the Nile. Both parties were satisfied with the understanding. Leopold had achieved part of his ambition : Great Britain had blocked France's route to the Sudan, and secured the right of passage for a Cape to Cairo railway.

France was furious at the news. Repenting their hasty rejection of Leopold's invitation, the government of the Republic reopened discussion with him, and on the 14th August, 1894, signed an agreement that left Equatoria and Lado to the Independent State, but preserved for France a road to the Nile. No logic guided French diplomacy on this occasion. Her government had complained of the Anglo-German agreement in 1890 on the ground that neither England nor Germany could assign territory that was the property of the Sultan of Turkey : in negotiating with Leopold, France was guilty of the very offence she denounced in others. But in the scramble for territory, the chancelleries of Europe were rarely troubled with nice scruples, and

France's conduct was neither better nor worse than that of her neighbours. She delayed some months before making use of her agreement with the Independent State. The position of her government was a little delicate. Though anxious to establish themselves without delay on the White Nile, they could not openly invite the chamber of deputies to vote a credit for the purpose, or England would become aware of their intention. But diplomacy has its own methods of acquiring information, and presently the French secret leaked out. The British sounded a note of warning,[1] reminding France that the Anglo-Egyptian sphere of influence covered the course of the Nile from source to mouth. To that intimation the other paid no heed. She continued her preparations, and ordered Marchand to advance.[2]

Thus at Fashoda, an insignificant river station half swamp half jungle, there was staged a drama, of which Great Britain had spoken the prologue as long ago as 1840.[3] Europe now breathlessly awaited the end, uncertain whether the curtain would fall on peace or war. The history of the year 1840 was repeating itself monotonously in 1898. France and Great Britain were again at daggers drawn upon the subject of Egypt. It was a preposterous, and for France an undignified situation. Marchand, even if he had been undisturbed by the Anglo-Egyptian forces, was not of sufficient strength to make an effective occupation of the basin of the White

[1] See speech by Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons on behalf of the Government, the 28th March, 1895. On that occasion he said emphatically that the British sphere of influence covered the whole of the Nile waterway. "At the Foreign Office we have no reason to suppose that any French expedition has been instructed to enter the Nile Valley." Monson, Ambassador in Paris, on the 10th December, 1897, repeated the warning. (*Egypt No. 2, 1898.*)

[2] France had been contemplating the despatch of a military mission to the White Nile, long before Marchand set out. If we may believe Cocheris (*Situation internationale de l'Egypte et du Soudan*), in May, 1893, the President of the Republic instructed Colonel Montheil, an officer in the service of the French Congo, to occupy Fashoda. Montheil actually started, but was recalled, upon agreement being reached with the Independent State.

[3] In 1840, when Great Britain, Russia and Austria supported the Sultan of Turkey in bringing Mohammed Ali, his rebellious vassal, to order. Thiers supported the latter, and the four Powers signed a Convention from which France was excluded. (See chapters VIII and IX, *Letters of Queen Victoria*, Murray, London, 1908.)

Nile, nor could he hope to maintain himself permanently on the river. His supplies of food and munitions were running short, and he would have had to decide within the next few weeks between taking refuge in Abyssinia, or retracing his steps to Brazzaville. Next, France on her own showing had no title to occupy any part of the basin of the White Nile. The Sultan of Turkey, the overlord, had not invited her to do so, nor had Egypt the vassal besought her intervention. In short, both morality and common sense condemned the mission.

Kitchener, reaching Fashoda on the 19th September, 1898, discovered Marchand established in the fort. The Frenchman would listen to no argument. He would not admit the presence of his mission in Sudan territory to be a violation of Egyptian rights, nor would he acknowledge his incapacity to defend Fashoda. He spoke of the Sudan as no man's land, he talked of resistance, as if an army corps were at his back. Rapidly the situation grew to be ridiculous, until at last Marchand gave way, and permitted Kitchener to hoist the Egyptian standard. Thus terminated an episode that might have brought about war between two great Powers. But France quivered for many weeks with angry emotion. That strange affliction which victims call patriotism, and cooler brains hysteria, fastened upon her people. In the prevailing excitement, sense of proportion was lost. The Paris press spoke as if Great Britain had insulted the honour of France ; deputies talked wildly of revenge. Happily for humanity, the two governments preserved their composure, taking no part in the bluster and recrimination that filled the air. In both countries official circles spoke cautiously,[1] and neither government at heart thought of war. France indeed was unprepared. Cherbourg and Brest lacked guns and munitions, Corsica and Bizerta were no better off, and the colonies defenceless. She turned vainly to other countries

[1] On the 7th September, 1898, the minister of French Foreign affairs informed the British ambassador that he was ignorant of Marchand's situation, or where that officer had gone to prevent attack upon French territory. Later when excitement in France was at its height, the French government requested Her Majesty's ministers to name the area to which Marchand would be permitted to retire. Lord Salisbury regretted that his limited knowledge of African geography did not enable him to answer the question.

for diplomatic support. Russia, her friend, counselled making terms ; Germany professed strict neutrality. In brief, France, isolated in Europe, was incapable of making war. Reluctantly her government yielded to the logic of circumstances, and on the 4th November informed Great Britain that they withdrew French pretensions in the valley of the White Nile.

It was impracticable to divide the spoils of victory to the complete satisfaction of both Great Britain and Egypt : for each was convinced of her right to the lion's share. Thus the issue was confused at the outset, and it is desirable for the student who wishes to form a just appreciation of the rival claims to study the events recorded in this chapter. He will then be in a position to draw his own conclusions. To assist his pursuit, a few general observations may not perhaps be out of place. If permanent occupation of a territory constitutes the only valid title of sovereignty, then it must be confessed that the Egyptian claim is good in law. With the occupation of Sennaar in 1820, the northern half of the Sudan passed to Egypt ; with the occupation of the Bahr El Ghazal and Equatoria in 1871, the southern half followed. Her administration of these immense territories in short was unbroken until the Mahdi's challenge, her title to their sovereignty unquestioned until the recapture of Khartoum in 1898. Nor is it reasonable to argue that Egypt was then at liberty to abandon any part of her territory. The firmans granted to successive Khedives, sufficiently disprove that contention.[1] So much then may frankly be said on behalf of Egypt's claim. But occupation of conquered, or of annexed territory to be good in law must be not only continuous, but also effective, and it cannot honestly be said from 1881 onwards that Egypt exercised effective authority

[1] The firman of the 13th February, 1841, invested Mohammed Ali with the life governorship of Nubia, Darfur, Kordofan and Senna'ar with their annexes. On May 27th, 1866, Ismail obtained a fresh firman that made him hereditary governor of Egypt with all territories annexed and dependent upon that State. The firman issued to the Khedive Abbas Hilmi on the 27th March, 1892, concluded thus : "Le Khedive ne saura sous aucun pretexte ni motif, abandonner à d'autres en tout ou en partie, les privilèges accordés à l'Egypte, et qui sont lui confiés, et qui font partie integrante des droits inherents au pouvoir soverain, ni aucune partie du territoire."

over the greater part of the Sudan. Anarchy prevailed where the Mahdi's rule did not. Several causes contributed to bring about this painful state of things. The sudden enlargement of the Sudan by incorporating within its frontiers first the upper valley of the White Nile, and then the province of Darfur, threw a strain upon the administration, that Egypt could not support. Her own condition was then distracting. Maladministration and debt were crushing her people, and on top of these burdens was piled revolt in the Sudan. Its origin was primarily due to corruption and misrule : but the financial weakness of Egypt, the poor quality of the troops composing the garrison, and the suppression of the slave trade and of domestic slavery, were contributory causes.

Great Britain rested her claim officially upon the right of conquest,[1] and privately upon moral and more defensible grounds. Conquest is always a substantial title to possession : but in this instance it was complicated by two factors. First, Her Majesty's government had forced Egypt against her will to evacuate the Sudan, and secondly Egypt had not invited the British army to re-capture the territory. But worse evils may easily befall a country than the surrender of part of its dominion. Invasion is one, and it may pretty safely be said that evacuation of the Sudan in 1885 saved Egypt from that fate. No argument can alter the fact that without money and without troops, Egypt could not have stopped the advance of the Mahdi down the Nile. Later generations have challenged the possibility of such a march, but the history of the caliphate is full of exploits more arduous and formidable than that contemplated by the Mahdi. Wad En Nedjumi failed, it is true, in the undertaking : but conditions were then less favourable. The Mahdi's forces, flushed with victory, panted for fresh triumphs ; Wad En Nedjumi's rabble lacked the early enthusiasm. Nor can it reasonably be said that an Egyptian expedition single-

[1] Lord Salisbury on the 6th February, 1899, said : "We hold the territory of the Porte for two reasons : it is an indisputable part of Egypt, which we occupy, and also by the more ancient and easier to understand right of conquest. British and Egyptian troops have conquered it : but in my first note to France, I based our title upon the right of conquest, the most useful, the simplest and sanest of the two."

handed would have defeated the Khalifa in a prolonged campaign. His prestige may have been less in 1898, but the Arab tribes of Kordofan and Darfur and the blacks of Sennaar would still have responded to his call. Against their onslaught the Egyptian soldiers might have quavered and broken, as Hicks' conscripts did in Kordofan and Baker's gendarmerie at Suakin. An army cannot be rebuilt in the course of a few years.

In referring to the right of conquest, Lord Salisbury had not spoken out of bravado. His words were a timely reminder to the world that Great Britain had added the regeneration of the Sudan to her labours in Egypt, and public opinion at home pardoned the arrogance of the language in the knowledge that victory had brought about the release from misery of a race, whom Gladstone once described as " a gallant people rightly struggling to be free." That picturesque description still lingered in British memory, and no Englishman was prepared to witness another period of misgovernment in the Sudan. Egypt's past record was not inspiring, and the capacity of her people to govern was still doubtful. To entrust the Sudan again to their care might bring about fresh disaster, and Her Majesty's government could not afford to be involved in a third costly campaign.[1] Thus came the convention of the 19th January, 1899, an agreement that acknowledged the principle of Egypt's claim, but granted to Great Britain control over the administration of the Sudan. It was a short but comprehensive charter,[2] disarming the opposition of Europe by a declaration that Great Britain claimed no trading privilege or special powers. It acknowledged her title " by right of conquest to share in the present settlement and future work-

[1] Military operations in Egypt and in the Sudan had cost the British taxpayer a pretty penny, long before the recovery of the Sudan was contemplated. Russell, in *The Ruins of the Soudan* (Sampson Low, Marston, London, 1892), gives the expenditure on successive operations as follows: 1882–83, £5,134,171; 1884, £785,005; 1885, £3,475,377 plus a special credit of £300,000. In addition there was the first Suakin Expedition, £352,352; the second, £2,127,672, and the Suakin-Berber railway, £865,369, in addition to the ordinary charges of maintenance.

[2] Signed by Lord Cromer on behalf of Great Britain, and by Butros Pasha Ghali on behalf of Egypt. See Appendix I.

ing and development" of the country, it proclaimed that the British and Egyptian flags would float side by side throughout the Sudan, and it vested the supreme military and civil command in a Governor-General, appointed by Khedivial decree on the recommendation of the British government. It excluded the mixed tribunals from jurisdiction in the Sudan, and gave to Great Britain the right to approve or veto consular appointments. It was the end of Egypt's old ascendency.

CHAPTER X

DEVELOPMENT

To return to Egypt: as the public had anticipated, Sir Eldon Gorst in the spring of 1907 took Lord Cromer's place. His credentials justified the choice. To a quick wit and a lively ambition, he united an intimate knowledge of Egyptian administration. Advancement came early and easily to him. Leaving Cambridge he had entered the diplomatic service, and been posted to Cairo. There his talent created an immediate and favourable impression. It was a time when service in Egypt seemed to the discerning mind to offer great possibilities. Vincent and Milner had made the best of them: Gorst kept their example before his eyes. But diplomacy to this ambitious young man appeared a slow road to distinction, and by the advice of Lord Cromer, he joined the Khedivial government in 1890. He plunged at once into the mysteries of Egyptian finance. Hardly had he mastered them, than he passed as adviser to the ministry of interior, and in 1898 was appointed financial adviser, the highest post that an Englishman could hold in Egypt. Thus in less than eight years Gorst had climbed from the bottom to the top of the official ladder. It was an achievement that testified to his capacity and perseverance. His conduct of finance was eminently satisfactory. The campaign in the Sudan had strained the budget, and upon Gorst was imposed the disagreeable need of reducing expenditure. The task made him unpopular in many circles, and his abrupt habit of speech offended others. But there was no court of appeal open to his discomfited visitors. Lord Cromer objected to all unproductive expenditure, and heartily supported the new adviser's policy of parsimony, which no persuasion or remonstrance would move Gorst to relax. He was one of those fortunate individuals, always certain of his own judgment.

But the Egypt to which he returned in 1907 was not the Egypt he had known before. A different spirit inspired the people. In place of tranquil acceptance of British guidance, there was a noisy challenge of it, and a tendency to dispute its benefit. Time had brought about a change also in Gorst himself. He had spent the intervening years in the Foreign office, where he had been able review his theories about Egypt. He put away certain obsessions common to his contemporaries, but he acquired others in their place. He was now satisfied that the Egyptian people would rally round the dynasty of Mohammed Ali, that their aspirations would be met by a generous measure of local self-government, and that the direction of administration should rest in their hands. Conviction perhaps was not the only cause of these conclusions : he had marked the omens of the time. The Liberal party were in power, and its left wing curious about the administration of Egypt. The Khedive also had paid a visit to London, and his conversation had made an excellent impression upon people in authority. Gorst would have been less than human, if he had not taken note of these facts, and modified his beliefs in accordance with them. It was indeed no less than his duty to do so.

A rapid survey of the administration left him dissatisfied, and he examined the procedure of finance and interior more thoroughly. His conclusions were disappointing. He thought the first extravagant [1] and the second impolitic. He expressed his disapproval of new and costly services created since his departure, he spoke of forming a commission to investigate the relations of the British adviser of the interior with his minister. He passed, in short, as far as time allowed, a broom through both services. Simultaneously he made known his intention to enlarge the authority of the council of ministers, to widen the powers of local representative institutions, and to limit the number of Eng-

[1] Budget estimates were severely pruned during his term of office, and expenditure dropped from £E.18,926,911 in 1907 to £E16,406,000 in 1911. Gorst was fortunate in his financial adviser. Sir Paul Harvey was a man of exceptional calibre : a lucid and original thinker, a master of financial business. He went back to the British civil service shortly after Sir Eldon's death, and Egypt was the poorer by his departure.

lishmen in the civil service.[1] The programme signified the end of the Cromer era.

Egypt responded to the gesture, and laid aside her preoccupation with politics. The national party fell into confusion. The leader, Mustapha Kamal, was ill, and there was no lieutenant capable of stemming the wave of disruption. Desertions from the party were signalled daily: spite and jealousy divided the remnant. The storm that had broken with so little warning, seemed over, and the political horizon was clear again. It was tribute to Gorst's judgment. He had composed the differences that separated the throne from the British agency in the past, and was now on pleasant and friendly terms with the Khedive. It suited the latter also to throw his weight on the side of law and order. He was enjoying the agreeable sensation of finding his opinion solicited on matters of state, and he was determined to show in return that his estrangement with Cromer was personal, and not political. His Highness was a curious mixture of good and evil: it seemed to depend upon accident or upon the company he kept, whether the first, or the last predominated. But he was as susceptible to kindness, as he was offended by rebuke, and to Lord Cromer he invariably showed the worst side of his nature. It was not perhaps entirely his fault. Disparity of age and difference in temperament contributed to misunderstanding. Gorst was less inclined to be hard upon the defects of youth. He was willing to wipe out the past, to be the ally rather than the mentor of the throne, if the Khedive in turn would reciprocate that good will, by amendment of his ways. It was a hint that met with a ready answer: there was nothing that the other would not promise his new found friend. The resignation of Mustapha Pasha Fehmi, the associate of Lord Cromer for more than a dozen years, provided an occasion to prove his words. His Highness left the choice of a new prime minister to the judgment of Gorst. Butros Pasha Ghali, a Copt, was

[1] Sir Eldon Gorst in the course of the spring of 1908 took the British officials into his confidence. He assembled them at the agency, and explained his programme. Versions of his address still exist: but to the writer of this history, who preserves a lively recollection of the speaker's words, the address was no more than a gentle reminder to the audience of Great Britain's earlier pledges on the subject of the occupation.

the latter's nomination, and Abbas Hilmi dutifully accepted it. The appointment marked the turning down of one more page in the history of Egypt: Butros was the first pure Egyptian to hold the office. He replaced an amiable and even-tempered man, who if less capable than Nubar and less crafty than Riaz, could temper his ambition. A cool judgment, a nice discrimination, and a sure instinct of anticipation seldom let Mustapha Fehmi go astray. His office could never have been a bed of roses. On one side stood a petulant and frowning Khedive, on the other a determined and far-seeing Englishman. Between this ill-consorted pair, he steered an even course. It was an achievement that only a shrewd and prudent man could have accomplished, and writers who speak of Mustapha Fehmi as a nonentity, are ill-informed. He was Egyptian in all but descent: but that accident did not blind him to the weakness of his adopted country, or to its need of British assistance. He was a truer friend to Egypt than his enemies allowed.

Thus within a few months of his return, Gorst had accomplished part of his task. He had won over the Khedive, and he had a prime minister and a council of ministers eager to shoulder the responsibilities of government. There remained then only the need of convincing the country at large that Great Britain seriously proposed to relinquish control over Egyptian administration. There were several ways of indicating that intention: the quickest obviously was to transfer direction of some ministry or department to Egyptian hands. But Gorst had to tread warily at this point. The moral of Lord Cromer's experiment with the capitulations, was before his eyes. He could afford to disregard the susceptibilities of Englishmen serving the Khedivial government, but the prejudices of the foreign community were less easy to deal with. He pitched therefore upon the ministry of interior as the least open to objection on that score. It was an adroit choice in another way: for Egyptians look upon this ministry as the pivot of government, the symbol of authority, and the fount of patronage. Sir Eldon Gorst had now to discover a lieutenant who would carry out his ideas. His eye fell upon Sir Arthur Chitty, then an under secretary of finance. Chitty was a man of retiring habit of life, known only to a few intimates: beyond

vague gossip of his partiality for Egyptians, foreigners had hardly heard of him. Gorst was better informed. In Chitty he had recognized a spirit kindred to his own, an Englishman, who disapproved of the complete monopoly of government by his fellow-countrymen. Chitty's task was unpleasant and laborious. He could efface his own personality ; it was less easy to persuade his subordinates to imitate the example. It was not that they clung particularly to power : but they genuinely doubted whether the organization so carefully built by Cromer, would survive the surrender. Chitty, less moved by that consideration, ruthlessly brushed aside officials slow to conform to the new ideals, and those Englishmen who ventured a word of caution, were bidden to mind their own business. Their anxiety was not without cause. Advancement, now in the hands of Egyptian ministers, went by favour. Hitherto the Englishman had spoken last in the matter of promotion. He was sometimes misled, but he could at least claim that merit alone influenced his decision. That was so no longer. Nepotism and private interests took precedence of those of the State. It was a lamentable descent from the ideals of the occupation.

But Gorst was prudent. He would not withdraw every check upon government, until ministers had satisfied him of their intention to maintain the existing standards of efficiency. He kept the British inspectorate of the interior at full strength until the prime minister agreed to provide a better type of mudir. To get rid of the inspectorate, Mohammed Pasha Said, minister of interior, was ready to promise a good deal. The British inspector had always been a thorn in the side of Egyptian authority ; he would be a more painful one in the new conditions. Nor could any minister be proud of the mudir [1] of this period. They were now all Egyptians, less vigorous than the Turks they had replaced, but little stricter in standards of morality. It was unfortunate for provincial Egypt that this was so : for the mudir was still a powerful personality within his jurisdiction. His favour was courted by omdas and sheikhs, his lightest words were respectfully received. Lord Cromer seldom interfered with the patronage of the appointment. He

[1] Egypt is divided into fourteen provinces, each in charge of a mudir : a village is under an omda assisted by one or two sheikhs.

spoke once when exasperated beyond endurance by the indolence of mudirs, of replacing them with Englishmen: but the idea was inconsonant with his general policy, and he did not pursue it. It was his habit indeed to leave the selection in the hands of the adviser of the interior and his minister, who not unnaturally preferred candidates acquainted with administrative routine. Thus it came about that most mudirs began and ended their career in this ministry. It was an unwholesome practice, since it confined the choice to a narrow field. Gorst would have widened its boundaries, and even encouraged belief that the office of mudir was a stepping stone to the council of ministers. But it was not easy to drive home that ideal, or persuade the best Egyptians to come forward as candidates. Men who had won distinction in other branches of the civil service, were unwilling to hazard it in middle age by embarking upon an unfamiliar routine, and even ministers counselled prospective candidates to think twice before they joined the interior. Only the ministry of justice looked at the invitation from a more hopeful angle, and its motive was not wholly disinterested. The lower grades were overcrowded with ambitious and clever young lawyers, for whom there was little prospect of advancement, until their seniors made way for them. To these older men, the prime minister made a successful appeal. Some listened and took the plunge.

The new-comers quickly made their presence felt. They swept clean, too clean perhaps for a rural population to understand and appreciate. They purged the administrative courts of the scandal attached to their practice, they infused into the procedure elementary principles of law. The fellahin, accustomed to greater licence, took the medicine amiss. They resented the mudir's refusal to allow irrelevant argument, and they complained when he cut short an offender's voluble apology. More notably, the investigation of crime profited from his presence in the provinces. For a number of years a bitter and monstrous feud had reigned between the police and the parquet,[1] and many people ascribed in-

[1] The parquet has no counterpart in English law. Its official duties comprise the investigation and prosecution of criminal offences. The members are lawyers by profession, and invested with considerable powers. It is they who decide whether an accused person shall be sent to trial, or be released.

crease of serious crime to this unfortunate state of affairs. It was certainly a fact that too many criminals escaped their deserts, and that lawlessness went unpunished. Lord Cromer could have stopped the feud by the simple process of placing the parquet under the authority of the mudir ; but with the evils of brigandage commissions fresh in memory, he prudently declined that responsibility. Police and parquet blamed each other impartially. The first declared the parquet's reluctance to accept their evidence to be the main cause of the growth of crime : the second complained that the improper methods of collection of evidence favoured by the police, left them no other choice. Each had some reason to accuse the other. If the police extorted confession by force, the parquet did not put themselves out to attend the early stages of an investigation. Neither would yield an inch of their pretensions, and the friction became intolerable, when the adviser of the interior supported the police, and the adviser of the ministry of justice the parquet. A mudir translated from the court of appeal to the provinces, pretty quickly put a stop to this foolish antagonism. He had no patience with either party. He was powerless to prevent crime : but when an offender was caught, he saw to it that the evidence was sufficient to convict. Unfortunately he was less inclined to master other routine duties of his post. He would neither visit the more remote districts of his province, nor take pains to discover the needs of the population. There was certainly some excuse at this period for a middle-aged Egyptian, accustomed to sedentary habits of life, to think twice before he left a comfortable headquarters. Movement in the provinces at the best was an exhausting business, and a horse or donkey the only means of communication between distant villages. There were no trunk roads in the country, and the field tracks and canal banks, which then did duty for them, would not carry wheeled traffic. Thus the mudir unaccustomed to physical exertion seldom visited outstations, and carried out his inspection vicariously. The result was inevitable. Within a few months there was a noticeable decline in the old standards of administration, and ministers, alarmed lest Gorst should withdraw his concessions, sought a substitute for the British inspectorate. They could not replace it by a second staffed with Egypt-

ians : for that experiment had been already tried and found wanting. It was discovered that much as provincial authority disliked the presence of roving Englishmen, it resented still more that of Egyptians.

So came about a modest resuscitation of the British inspectorate. The senior inspectors were removed, their places taken by younger and less experienced Englishmen with restricted powers. In this way the minister in Cairo sought to check the power of the mudir, and maintain the old standards of administration. It was a fatal step from the Egyptian point of view. The young inspector lived at first as he was bidden to do. He took up his residence in a particular province, and honourably endeavouring to fulfill the spirit of his instructions, he reported to the mudir the result of his inspection. But he could not get rid of the prestige, that still clung to his nationality, so easily, nor would a village believe the Englishman to be there merely to register complaint : and the situation, never very agreeable, became more delicate, when ministers used his reports to check those of the mudir. Gorst, aware of these and other inconveniences, trusted to repair them by enlarging the powers of provincial councils. His policy was perfectly consistent. Administrative authority in future would lie with the Khedive and his ministers, but the British consul-general would be there to prompt the first, the new provincial councils to restrain arbitrary action of the agents of the second. And lest that check should be insufficient, he bestowed also upon the legislative council the privilege of questioning a minister.[1] Thus every concession was accompanied by some safeguard or other, and those who spoke of Gorst as careless whether he exposed Egypt to the return of despotism, were deceived. His intention was the contrary. He sought to remind authority that the last word in government rested with the people.

There could be no doubt of the need of amending the composition and the powers of provincial councils. All representative institutions of the country had outgrown the

[1] He defined the privilege thus : "The government have announced their readiness to answer all questions on administrative matters of general interest, which members may submit to them." (*Egypt No. 1, 1910.*)

organic law of 1883 : none more glaringly than the provincial council. It was a travesty of local self-government : except in the matter of irrigation, the inhabitants of a province had no say in their domestic business. They could impose no rates, authorize no markets, grant no concessions, express no opinion upon services, which affect the welfare of every community. The views of a provincial council upon education or health were not invited : if the government required information upon these and kindred subjects, the mudir and the inspector between them supplied it. The council in short was a relic of a gloomy and autocratic past that had now disappeared. The law of 1909 breathed fresh life into provincial administration. All local business fell within its purview, and members of the new bodies spoke and voted as they pleased. It was their privilege to decide, the duty of authority to execute. Sharp criticism followed the publication of the law. Some of its provisions were thought unnecessarily liberal, others declared to be unworkable, and the executive and many of the councils squabbled over details of procedure. But if the new machinery creaked uneasily, the fault did not lie with the designer, and Gorst's bold reform remains a standing proof of his political insight.

Yet despite occasional lapses and indiscretions, it may fairly be said that the Khedive and the ministers had made a better hand at government, than many Englishmen were disposed to admit. There were instances of glaring jobbery in the administration, there were times when desire to pay off old scores overcame prudence : but on the whole the ideals set up by the occupation, were tolerably well preserved. Twice ministers broke away from its tradition, but in each instance circumstances justified the departure. The ruling classes of Egypt have always been peculiarly sensitive to adverse opinion, and the more untruthful it is, the deeper the offence seems to rankle. The general assembly and the legislative council had vainly urged the need of curtailing the licence of the press : but Lord Cromer would not interfere, and Egyptians of position had to put up with calumny as best they could. Only the Khedive escaped attack, less it must be said out of respect to his position, than from the knowledge that he had means of his own of punishing a libeller. Already his hand had fallen heavily upon the

organizers of the Hisbet El Umma, or party of the people, whose political programme limited the prerogative of the throne, and journalists marking the moral, left His Highness alone. But the ministers had no such defence, and upon them editors concentrated their abuse, until driven to despair the government revived the press law of 1881. The effect was instantaneous. One or two leading offenders were convicted and sentenced, and their papers suppressed. Egyptian journalism went back to the safer pursuit of vilifying Great Britain.[1]

In endeavouring to reduce the incidence of crime, ministers floundered in deeper waters. Brigandage by now had practically ceased, robbery with violence was less common : but murder was terribly rife. Every inhabitant of Egypt went about with an eye upon his neighbour. A light word would set a whole village by the ears : gossip about a woman, or dispute about a water right was always sufficient to produce a crop of murder. Life is cheap in the provinces, and men kill one another there with little compunction. There is no kindly samaritan to warn the victim, or inform the police : but the dead man's friends know the perpetrator of the crime, and presently he becomes the target of their bullets. Tribal and family instincts dominate theEgyptian countryside, and the common saying, " I will fight with my brother, but I and my brother will fight my cousin," is abundantly true. The vendetta is pursued, until the whole village is weary of slaughter. There seemed no end to this savage business. Year by year the tales of murders had increased, and provincial society took fright, when omdas and sheikhs began to figure among the killed. Such was the situation, when ministers determined to concentrate all potential criminals in a desert penal settlement. The

[1] There were a number of instances, the most notorious offender being the *Lewa*, a violent anti-British newspaper, founded by Mustapha Kamel. In one issue, the editor accused the Sudan government of having hanged forty innocent persons, said to have been implicated in the murder of a British official and an Egyptian officer at Kamlin on the Blue Nile in 1907. There was no truth in the statement : only the actual assassin paid the penalty of the crime. The court of first instance acquitted the editor and the court of appeal confirmed the judgment, on the ground that no satisfactory proof of the falsity of the statement was tendered.

measure was not ill suited to the conditions, but the difficulty lay in applying it in a country where life is sworn away with little hesitation. The task of deciding who was or was not a potential criminal, required powers of divination greater than Egyptian authority possessed, and presently it was rumoured that the law of relegation was becoming an instrument for satisfying personal spite. The hint was enough, and ministers prudently abandoned the experiment.

Meanwhile many influential Egyptians were contemplating with some anxiety the passing of administrative authority into the hands of the Khedive and the ministry: they were more distrustful of the ambition of the first, and the weakness of the second, than the British agent and consul-general. The general assembly and the legislative council voiced the suspicion. Neither chamber would venture openly to indict the throne: but questions addressed to ministers pretty plainly indicated the quarter from which the wind was blowing. Ministers were shown less mercy. The legislative council asked inconvenient questions about the budget, and heckled the government upon the relations of Egypt with the Sudan. And when the exasperated ministers refused to supplement their official statements, the council retaliated by clamouring for full constitutional rights.[1] Debate upon an offer made by the Suez canal company brought matters to a head. The company's concession would expire in 1968, and the shareholders were anxious to extend the term. It was a proposal that cut both ways. Egypt was in sore need of capital and of fresh revenue, and the agreement would supply both: on the other hand, acceptance would oblige Egypt to relinquish sovereign rights over part of her territory for a further term of years. In the end the company agreed to pay down a lump sum of £E.4,000,000 and admit Egypt to a share of the annual profits, if the concession was prolonged by forty years. Gorst and his financial adviser

[1] Losing patience, Gorst wrote: "The policy of ruling Egypt in co-operation with native ministers is, at the present time, incompatible with that of encouraging the development of so-called representative institutions. The ministers are chosen from the most capable Egyptians, and are better acquainted with the real desires and opinions of their countrymen than the members of a council who in reality represent nothing but the class of wealthy Beys and Pashas." (*Egypt No. 1, 1911.*)

thought the offer handsome enough, and recommended ministers to accept it. But no sooner had the latter done so, than Egypt shouted her dissent, and called upon them to repudiate their action. It was an awkward predicament. The organic law of 1883 had provided for no such contingency as this, and Gorst, after taking counsel with the Khedive, threw the responsibility of decision upon the general assembly. The conclusion was foregone, and only one vote was cast on the side of the ministers. It was a mortifying experience for Gorst: for he had confidently counted upon the Khedive and ministers to secure a reasonable measure of support. Worse was to follow. Within a few hours of his defeat in the assembly Butros Pasha Ghali, the prime minister, was killed, as he stepped into his carriage. It was a wicked and rash crime, the more depressing from its sequel. Religion was freely imported into it. Butros was a Christian prime minister, and misguided fanatics spoke as if the outrage had expiated an insult to Islam. In their eyes, Wardani [1] the assassin was the hero and avenger of his nation. Little wonder if Gorst despaired of Egypt.

For some time Copt and Moslem had been snarling at one another as dogs over a bone. They had broken the pact, and undone the unity which Mustapha Kamel had been at pains to promote. The origin of the dispute is obscure: but it sprang mainly from the anxiety of the Moslem majority in the national party to get rid of the Copts. The truce between these men of two religions had not long survived Mustapha Kamel's death. Scarcely was his body laid in its grave than the old feud broke out. The new leader Mustapha Bey Ferid, an undistinguished man, could not hold his supporters together, and soon control passed from him to men who boasted that they drew their inspiration from Islam. At the head of these reckless spirits was Sheikh Shawish Abdul Aziz. Proclaiming his intention to purge the national party of Christians, this turbulent fellow suc-

[1] The murderer declared that his victim deserved death for the following reasons: as minister of foreign affairs he had signed away in January, 1899, Egypt's sovereign rights over the Sudan; as minister of justice in 1906 he had presided over the Dinshawai trial; as prime minister he had revived the press law, and advocated acceptance of the Suez canal company's offer.

ceeded in destroying all ideals of unity. Sulkily the Copt withdrew, and with him went the sober-minded Moslem.

From the duel Gorst held cautiously aloof. It was not his business to compose the political differences of Egypt, much less the quarrels of men who indoctrinated her with hatred of England. But such neutrality was only possible, so long as the dispute remained political: once it became a religious issue, that neutrality was less easy to maintain. South of the Mediterranean fanaticism runs high, and the common relations of life are forgotten in a clash of creeds. Already the Moslem was exhorting his co-religionists to rally round Islam, and the Copt was whispering that Christianity was in peril. Little common sense or charity distinguished at this stage Egyptians of either faith, and each set to work to enlist the favour of authority. The Khedive did not commit himself: but some of his ministers were less prudent. They were Moslem to a man, and the Copt in alarm appealed to the British agency. It was a false step. Great Britain had never deliberately meddled in religious rivalries, and Gorst strove hard to keep out of this. He was quite impartial, but he could not perceive the justice of the Copts' complaint. Nothing, it may be said, distinguished more the early Christian Church in Egypt than the stubbornness with which bishops and congregations met their vicissitudes, and the Copt [1] of to-day, descendant of these obstinate people, has inherited their indomitable spirit. Neither persecution nor isolation will bend it, and in a struggle which has lasted for centuries, the Copt still holds his own with the Moslem. In the government he is securely entrenched; over certain services, notably the finance, he has established a comfortable monopoly. Aptitude and industry no doubt had contributed to this good fortune, but the fact remained that at that moment the Copt held 45 per cent. of appointments in the gift of the government. It might be thought in these circumstances that he would be content with his lot: but he was not. He wanted his share of a few executive posts reserved for Moslems, he demanded special representation

[1] The Arab was the first to speak of the indigenous Egyptian as a Copt. It is now generally agreed that Copt is a corruption of the Greek *Aiguptos*. (See E. Wiet's article KIBT, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Leyden.)

upon the new provincial councils, and he claimed Sunday as the weekly day of rest.[1] Nothing had before been heard of these complaints and Gorst could not satisfy himself that the Copt suffered any disability. It seemed neither wise nor just to set a Christian mudir over a Moslem population. Nor was independent opinion at all unanimous of a Copt's capacity to perform executive duties. He had many virtues: but the qualities essential by common consent to an administrator were not numbered among them. Equally it disapproved of providing minorities with special representation upon provincial councils. There might be some substance in the complaint that the provincial council provided instruction in religion for Moslem children, and ignored the need of the Copt. But the remedy here was obviously concession, and not the introduction of special representation, perpetuating discord, and impairing sense of citizenship. As for the cry to make Sunday an official day of rest, it was clearly impracticable. Already government offices were shut on Fridays: to close them on Sundays would dislocate the business of the State.

Such were the views of Sir Eldon Gorst, and it may be said also, of all Englishmen who wished well to Egypt. That unanimity should have been sufficient warning to the leaders of the Coptic community: but they had gone too far now to withdraw. They pushed on preparations for holding a congress, and though the patriarch in Cairo withheld his blessing, some 1,200 delegates met in the early spring of 1911 at Assiut, and demanded complete equality of treatment. At once Islam awoke, and trumpeted a counterblast. A Moslem congress was hastily convened, and Riaz Pasha invited to preside over its deliberations. He would have served his ancient reputation better by declining the compliment. It was twenty years since his retirement from public life, and in the interval he had grown old, and his hand had lost its cunning. He could keep no sort of order, and the congress ended in noise and confusion. It was perhaps not an unfitting conclusion, since the sum of its labour was nil. In proclaiming that Islam was the official religion of Egypt,

[1] For a full and on the whole moderate presentment of the Coptic contention, see *Copts and Moslems under British Control* by Kyriak Mikhail (Smith, Elder & Co., London, 1911).

speakers took occasion to denounce Christianity, and revile its followers. The press had already marked down the quarry,[1] and the congress took up the pursuit with ardour. It must be said that the Copts at Assiut had behaved with greater dignity. There was no abuse of Islam, no whisper of reprisals against the Moslem world of Egypt. Debate was confined to discussion of grievances, and speakers who overlapped that limit were sharply called to order. Less decorum and forbearance inspired the proceedings in Cairo. Riaz, the shrunken shadow of a man, gave himself over to sheikhs and ulemas, who set no bounds to their licence, and the audience was constrained to listen to an unending and unedifying discourse upon the virtues of Islam. The congress, never representative of educated opinion, became less so at each sitting, until in high displeasure at the turn debate had taken, respectable Moslems ceased to attend. The air of Egypt is unsuited to free discussion, and when passion runs high, even a faint whisper of opposition is sufficient to provoke violent language. In Cairo the speakers went too far, and inspired society to cry a plague upon both congresses. They had done incalculable harm to the cause of Egypt, re-opening differences and widening feuds. Happily for the country, there were men more sensible and more patriotic, who set to work to repair the mischief. It was an arduous and protracted business. Neither Moslem nor Copt would listen to these counsellors, until time shamed both into declaring a truce. The peace that followed laid the foundation of worthier national ideals.

Gorst did not live to see the development. His days were numbered and in the summer of 1911 he returned to England to die. It was an unhappy ending to a career so rich of promise. Memories are short. Sir Eldon Gorst's

[1] The *El Alam* in its issue of the 15th March, 1911, discussing alleged Coptic grievances, declared that "minorities in every country are miserable, despised by everyone and treated like cattle." The *Misr el Fatat* also said: "Society will suppress you (Christianity), until as a Church you are utterly decayed and absorbed by the greater mass of the population. With clergymen's robes concealing their tigers' skins and lions' claws, the Copts collect their forces to spring upon Moslems." At Qena Station when bidding farewell to the delegates of the Cairo congress, the crowd shouted, "May God exalt Islam, and destroy the religion of the Christian."

name is seldom mentioned now, the turn he gave to British policy in Egypt is forgotten. Egyptians have little excuse for that neglect: for they gathered a harvest from the seed which he scattered. Upon his shoulders fell the responsibility of the mistakes and follies committed by Egypt during this period of apprenticeship to the art of government. He carried the painful burden in silence, though no month passed that some publicist at home did not hint the need for his recall. Gorst would have borne these attacks better, could he have counted upon the support of his own countrymen in Egypt.[1] But no such backing was forthcoming from them; he was even accused of designing to terminate the occupation as quickly as possible. It was an absurd indictment: Gorst never harboured the idea. And as if he was not sufficiently embarrassed by the criticism of the foreign community, he had also to put up with the judgment of visitors who rested a day or two in Cairo. Mr. Roosevelt was among their number. This distinguished American took a glance at the situation and thought it gloomy. He was no man to mince his words, and later counselled England to govern or get out. The advice was well meant: it even moved the Foreign secretary to warn Egypt that reform must wait until political agitation subsided. But Mr. Roosevelt's advice hampered Gorst, and interrupted his friendly relations with Egypt.

If Gorst had been an ideal candidate for the appointment of Agent and consul-general, Lord Kitchener four years later was doubly so. His reputation was higher, his knowledge of Egypt as extensive. His acquaintance with her people went back to the first days of the occupation, when Sir Evelyn Wood was Sirdar of an Egyptian army in the making. He elected to join Wood's staff, and he had never cause to regret that decision. The Nile expedition of 1884 provided Kitchener with his first chance of distinction, Suakin a year

[1] The British Chamber of Commerce in Egypt continually deplored the prevailing unrest and commercial insecurity. Upon one occasion it addressed a memorandum to the British agent and consul-general stating that "the position is largely due to the action of native agitators," and urged "His Britannic Majesty's government to put an end to such agitation, and so restore that tranquillity, which is essential to commercial prosperity, and to the general welfare in Egypt." (*Egypt No. 1, 1911.*)

or two later with the next. He was then governor-general and commander-in-chief of the Red Sea littoral, a command less responsible perhaps than that sonorous description implies. Egypt's dominion over this region had sadly shrunk. Of it only the port and town of Suakin remained : the rest was in the hands of Osman Digna. But there Kitchener had his first lesson in administration. It was not an agreeable experience : England was pulling one way, Egypt another. But Lord Cromer stood by his imperious young lieutenant, and when occasion offered, befriended him. In due course Kitchener became sirdar, and in 1898 governor-general of the Sudan. Now after an absence of twelve years he was back in Egypt. But it was a different Kitchener from the distant days of the Omdurman campaign. If his mind was as vigorous and his imagination as quick, his flashes of intuition were fewer, his curiosity was less, and his passion for economy had grown colder. Time had subtly changed the man. Angularities of temper and character had gone : he was less brusque in manner, more easy of approach.

It was astonishing how warmly Egypt welcomed the returning wanderer. There were now in the streets of Cairo nothing but smiles and nodding heads : the passion and confusion that had darkened the last days of Gorst seemed to have vanished. Egyptians indeed cannot pursue political quarrel for overlong. Their interest in it wanes, their faculty of emotion is soon expended. But the goodwill that reigned was a tribute to Lord Kitchener's individuality : it did not signify that the current of hostility towards the occupation flowed any less swiftly. For a few months, it seemed as if the newcomer could do no wrong. His handling of a delicate situation provoked by war between Italy and Turkey, was masterly. Egyptian sympathy was naturally on the side of the second, and the Ottoman general staff took advantage of it, to infringe the laws of neutrality. Tripoli had become a theatre of war, and Turkey could only keep in touch with the defenders through Egypt. It was anomalous that a suzerain power had to make surreptitious use of its vassal, but the British occupation stood in the way. Italy was on friendly terms with England, and reasonably enough she expected the latter to safeguard Egypt's neu-

trality. In deciding between these conflicting interests, a cool judgment was required. There was little doubt that small convoys under Ottoman officers were eluding the friendly Egyptian police and passing from Alexandria to the headquarters of the Senussi, and it is testimony to Lord Kitchener's remarkable discretion that he stopped the practice without offending Egyptian susceptibility. Meanwhile rumour was busy in guessing at Kitchener's intentions towards Egypt, and it was whispered that he contemplated reversing his predecessor's policy. The wish perhaps fathered the thought. But no one was likely to witness complete return to the Cromer tradition: Gorst had ploughed too deeply for that. Nor was Kitchener sufficiently interested in the details of administration to notice whether Egyptians or Englishmen directed them. Mentally he was accustomed to divide officials into two classes: those who were useful to his plans, and those who were not. The first were his especial care, the second he left to the offices of his financial adviser. Lord Edward Cecil [1] had taken Sir Paul Harvey's place. He was Kitchener's own choice, and it must be said that the substitution of Cecil for Harvey did not altogether profit Egypt. His technical knowledge was limited: with banking he had no acquaintance. But to Kitchener, these deficiencies in a financial adviser were of little moment. He was accustomed to evolve his own plans, and it was only in their execution that he required the services of others. Cecil had been his staff officer in the field, and he expected from him the same obedience to his wishes

[1] Cecil began life as a soldier. He was a special service officer in the Dongola campaign of 1896, a member of Sir Rennell Rodd's mission to Abyssinia in the following year, and aide-de-camp to Kitchener in the Anglo-Egyptian advance on Khartoum in 1898. A few months later he went to South Africa on special service. The Transvaal burghers were arming for war, and Cecil became chief staff officer to Baden Powell in Mafeking. There he showed his capacity to undertake responsibility. There was difficulty in persuading authority to victual isolated garrisons like that of Mafeking, and Cecil boldly pledged Great Britain's credit. This vision saved the town, but his taste for war had been sated, and in 1901, he returned to the Sudan. It was the turning point of his life. He became agent-general of the Sudan, under secretary of State for war, under secretary of State for finance in quick succession, and finally financial adviser in 1912.

in a different and more peaceful sphere. Ministers went less to the agency than before, their under secretaries hardly at all. The financial adviser interpreted Lord Kitchener's wishes to the civil service, and the latter submissively accepted the new conditions. Thus there came about a mysterious renaissance of British influence and authority: Cecil found it more convenient to communicate through Englishmen than through Egyptians.

Kitchener was intent upon the betterment of agriculture. Its condition was certainly unsatisfactory: cotton in particular had sadly deteriorated in quality.[1] The government, it must be said, were not wholly free from blame. Although Egypt's prosperity depended upon the successful production of cotton, no ministry of agriculture watched the cultivator's interest, or improved the quality of crops by scientific research. A minority of the great proprietors, notably His Highness Prince Hussein Kamil, farmed intelligently: the rest left to their own resources, exhausted the soil without a thought of the future. When the fellah appealed to the government, it was for more water, and the endeavour of authority to satisfy the demand did not profit agriculture in the long run. For with additional water came saturation of the soil, and loss of its fertility. In its hurry to irrigate the Delta, authority lost sight of the need of adequate drainage. Something has already been said upon the point: but there was now more to it than keeping drains free from silt. A reconstruction of the Cairo barrage and the completion of the Aswan reservoir had provided more water; but that advantage was partially neutralized by the fact that existing canals could no longer act also as drains. So abundant had become the supply of irrigation water, that they were seldom closed. The design of the Egyptian canal had been changed. In place of water being carried in a deep and narrow channel, it ran now at a higher level than the land. The cultivator was certainly spared his old pains of

[1] The figures are curious reading. From 1894 to 1899 the mean yield per feddan (1·038 English acres) amounted to 5·34 kantars (kantar equals 99·05 lb.): from 1900 to 1905 to 4·53 kantars: from 1906 to 1913 to 4·26 kantars. (*Decline in the Yield of Egyptian Cotton*, by G. C. Dudgeon, late consulting agriculturist to the Egyptian government. Vol. XIX, No. 2, 1921, *Bulletin of the Imperial Institute*, John Murray, London.)

lifting it: but the practice had made him careless of saturating the soil. Infiltration followed, and extensive areas in the Delta became hopelessly waterlogged.

There was clearly only one remedy for this lamentable state of things. While the fellah was being educated to irrigate more sparingly, the ministry of public works must develop agricultural drainage. Every cubic metre of water added to the existing supply of water, accentuated the gravity of the situation. Matters were bad enough now: they would become worse, when the dam at Aswan had been heightened, and the storage capacity of the reservoir behind it enormously increased.[1] Moreover the future needs of Egypt had to be taken into account. Her population was growing apace, and the time was approaching, when economic pressure would drive the fellahin to virgin land. Common prudence bade government to prepare against that day. The reclamation of uninhabited areas required to be put in hand. In the salted and barren reaches bordering the Mediterranean, there was plenty of scope for the reclaiming engineer, and Lord Kitchener decided to make his initial experiment upon them. He produced a programme of his own, based upon the erection of a chain of powerful pumping stations. It cannot be pretended that professional opinion was entirely on his side. Timid minds shrank from the cost [2] and disputed the need of hurry. The criticism did not move Kitchener. Once he had chosen a course, he pursued it unfalteringly, and dropped by the wayside men who did not see eye to eye with him. Etiquette was his servant, not his master. If one authority questioned his judgment, he sought another, more complaisant. Moreover he took pride in being also an engineer, and he did not allow the world to forget the fact. Neither would he listen to remonstrance on the subject of cost. The estimates were his own, and he considered it the business of the treasury to accept them as they stood. Yet of Lord Kitchener's conception this much may truly be said. However faulty his projects, however unconventional his ideas of the duty of a finance

[1] The work was completed in 1912, and held up 2,420,000 cubic metres of water in place of 980,000,000. (*Egypt No. 1, 1913.*)

[2] Estimated at £E.2,500,000 to reclaim an area of a million feddans.

ministry, he alone foresaw the need of providing Egypt with more cultivable land. If he did not accomplish all he set out to do, he pointed a warning that Egypt has not yet taken to heart.

War interrupting progress in Egypt, as elsewhere in the world, did not permit Kitchener's reclamation and pumping schemes to be carried to their conclusion, but in the untroubled years of 1912 and 1913 he made a beginning by planting colonies of fellahin on areas hitherto uncultivated. The province of Gharbia was the subject of his first experiment, and its mudir became the associate of his plans. Nothing it may be said in parenthesis, better illustrated Lord Kitchener's conceptions of government, than the use he made of the civil service. His views on departmental discipline were never exacting, and while ministers and advisers cooled their heels outside his door, their subordinates were closeted within. There was grumbling, but no open complaint of that procedure, so completely had Kitchener's personality mastered Egypt. Yet it is questionable whether he did not push the doctrine too far. Routine is the essence of ordered government, and confusion arises when it is ignored. It was so frequently at this period. Juniors gave advice at variance with the views of their superiors, and Kitchener admitted the first to his confidence and excluded the second. Of his endeavour to colonize land in Gharbia it cannot be said that the initial experiment was encouraging. Disregarding the advice of men of riper experience, he chose areas and colonists imprudently. The land was only partially reclaimed, the settlers were unsuitable. Some were men of notorious character, of whom a neighbouring province was glad to be rid: others were poor field workers. A second trial on more reasonable lines gave better promise. Land when reclaimed was offered to the people of the neighbourhood, who farmed it on easy terms.

But deficient drainage was not the sole cause of cotton deterioration; other factors, notably insect pests and over production, accentuated the evil. Legislation might modify the second: but between capitulations and agricultural conservatism, progress by way of legal restriction, would be slow. There was more prospect of combating the first. Insect pests were no new misfortune for Egypt. More

than one government commission had sat to study ways and means of abating their ravages, and in 1884 "*un grand nombre de cultivateurs et même quelques mudirs*"[1] had acknowledged that the worm could be no mysterious visitation of Providence. With that admission unhappily the government rested satisfied until 1905, when leading agriculturists noting the successful outcome of a campaign against locusts in the preceding year, urged Lord Cromer to undertake the destruction of the cotton worm. But the battle was waged half-heartedly, and the inspiration of the attack vanished, when Gorst withdrew the British inspectorate. A severe outbreak in 1911 spurred the government to renewed action, and in the following year Kitchener took in hand the education of the country on the matter. It was high time.

Although Cromer and Kitchener differed widely in temperament and belief, they met on common ground in a profound respect for the fellah. His simple nature, his frugal manner of life, and his air of patient resignation captured their attention, and each in his own way endeavoured to mark his regard. Cromer had relieved the peasant from abuse of government, Kitchener now desired to defend him from the oppression of the individual. The victim had need of protection. He was fleeced and cheated at every turn. Cromer, it is true, had tried to rescue him from the usurer by establishing an agricultural bank, that would lend money at reasonable rates and on reasonable conditions. But the experiment was less successful than he anticipated. The investing public duly found the capital: but they did not do so out of altruism, and soon clamoured for a larger return upon their money. Nor did the fellah grasp the principles that regulate sound banking. He was apt to offer security of doubtful value, he would equivocate when invited to explain why he required a loan. The village money-lender, more accommodating, asked no such inconvenient questions. Kitchener, impressed like Cromer with the need of rescuing the peasant from improvidence, determined upon a bolder course. He had already persuaded the government to introduce a usury ordinance that restricted interest to 9 per cent., to open village savings banks, and to establish

[1] *Report on the Cotton Worm*, 1905 (Mokattam Printing Press, Cairo, 1906), by P. W. Machell, adviser of the ministry of interior.

halakas or agencies, where cotton was weighed and stored : he now went to India for further inspiration and framed his Five feddan law [1] upon the Punjab land alienation act of 1900. Its publication provoked an outcry. The new law was denounced as socialism, and unwarrantable interference with the rights of the individual. How, it was asked, could agriculture flourish without capital or credit ? It was no doubt a question difficult to answer offhand, and the fellah sought long before he found a key to the mystery. But many men were ready to help him to the discovery. Laws in Egypt seem made to be broken, and people less scrupulous than directors of reputable banks and agencies, presently found ways and means of evading this particular act. So the peasant eventually got his money, though he paid more heavily than ever for the accommodation. He was relieved by war of the burden. In the following years cotton rose to fabulous prices, and the humble producer became a capitalist. There was then no need for him to borrow. None the less the Five feddan law served Egypt well. It checked borrowing and it encouraged thrift, two very great achievements.

Meanwhile storm was brewing in political quarters. Gorst's belief that Egypt would rally round the dynasty of Mohammed Ali was inconsistent with the facts : it was becoming on the contrary plain that certain sections of the community would never do so, if reunion implied acquiescence in the occupation. The reflection was provoking for Lord Kitchener, who only recently had assured the British public that political agitation in Egypt was at an end.[2] And he himself was none too pleased with the conduct of the Khedive. The friendly relations between the palace and the agency did not long outlast Gorst's death. Kitchener had begun with the honourable intention of maintaining them : but His Highness' conception of his duty towards Egypt drove him to despair. It must be confessed that the Khedive was not behaving very well. His attitude towards

[1] *The Homestead Exemption Law of* 1912. Article 2 provided that "The agricultural holdings of farmers who do not own more than five feddans of land cannot be seized for debt. This exemption includes the dwelling house of such farms as well as two draft animals, and the agricultural implements necessary for the cultivation of the said land."

[2] Page 2, *Egypt No. 1, 1912.*

ministers was at variance with his promises, his distribution of honours and rewards no less so, and finally the administration of Wakfs [1] property and revenue was severely criticised. Egyptian opinion declared that this lucrative business was farmed in the interest of palace favourites, and the Khedive's obstinate refusal to submit the accounts to independent audit, or the Wakf budget to the legislative council, lent colour to the accusation. He would confess to no irregularities in the accounts, or agree to amend the procedure of the administration. Misled and deceived by men bent upon making mischief, he expected Kitchener to hesitate before laying hands upon so ancient an institution as the Wakf. He was mistaken in his judgment of the man. Without further ado Kitchener relieved the Khedive of its management.

By the spring of 1913, it was pretty clear that nothing short of a generous instalment of government through representatives elected by the people, would satisfy Egypt. Concession in the matter of provincial councils had only whetted her appetite, and she was not prepared to barter her national aspirations for reform in administration. From Gorst's alliance with the throne, the occupation had become more obnoxious than ever to educated opinion. Ministers who dared to differ from the Khedive were incontinently dismissed from office, and their place taken by other men. It was the end of pretence to constitutional government, and Egyptians clamoured for opportunity to express their opinion. Kitchener took them at their word, and evolved the organic law of July, 1913. The new legislative assembly built out of the ruins of the legislative council and the general assembly, was hedged about with many restrictions and safeguards. Membership was larger and the proportion of nominated to elected members fewer : but except in that and in greater freedom of discussion, the rights and privileges of the legislative assembly did not

[1] A Wakf in Islamic law is the counterpart of a trust in English law. When property is made Wakf, its revenue is paid over to charitable and religious objects (Wakf Khairi), or to the benefit of individuals (Wakf Ahli). Mohammed Ali, Abbas I and Ismail in turn aimed at co-ordinating all Wakfs under a single control ; but it was left to Tewfik to create an administration of Wakfs under a director-general responsible to the throne.

differ greatly from those of its predecessors. The chamber remained a consultative body. The government nominated its president and the senior of his two deputies, and retained the right to grant or withhold leave to members to introduce measures.

Little satisfied with this parody of national aspirations, deputies marked their displeasure by obstructing business in every possible way. Baiting ministers became a favourite occupation. Under the leadership of Saad Pasha Zaghlul,[1] the sixty-six elected members formed an opposition, against which ministers and their seventeen supporters battled in vain. Zaghlul was merciless towards his old colleagues. He knew the chinks in their armour, he took pleasure in piercing them. Debate aroused his combative instincts: his speech was as violent as it was penetrating. Ministers would stand their ground for awhile, and then overwhelmed with invective and discomforted by argument, retire in confusion. Government became very difficult in these conditions, and ministers rejoiced when the first session came to an end. The assembly never sat again, and history therefore cannot record the issue of this struggle between the executive and the Egyptian people. But one or two inferences may be reasonably suggested. First that Lord Kitchener's incursion into constitutional law was premature. He stirred trouble already simmering: he satisfied no section of the community. Gorst's more modest experiment, it is true, had terminated unhappily; but there was yet time for his successor to repair its cardinal defect. The Khedive had proved a broken reed. But Gorst had indicated a definite policy, and Kitchener might well have persevered with it a little longer. And secondly that Lord Kitchener, but for the intervention of war, would surely have been confronted with a choice between two alternatives: to persuade the Khedive to recall Zaghlul to the ministry, and govern Egypt through him, or watch the gradual disintegration of government. For that Egyptian and his phalanx of sixty-six supporters were more than a match for any council of ministers.

[1] Elected deputy and junior vice-president of the chamber. Zaghlul had fallen out with the Khedive, and failing to obtain support from the agency, had resigned his office of minister in 1912.

CHAPTER XI

THE WAR

War shook the superstructure, but did not disturb the foundations of Egyptian life. To the rumours and echoes of impending struggle, the people of Egypt listened with incurious ears. They were no party to the quarrel, they knew nothing of the jealousies and rivalries that had caused the outbreak ; separated from Europe by the sea, they believed their isolation to be complete. That illusion vanished, when, at the bidding of England, the council of ministers declared a state of war. Then the Egyptian gave himself up to despair. Hating war, he was entangled in it ; loathing the occupation, he had linked his fortunes with it. He was too timid and too inarticulate to speak out his mind, but deep in his heart he cursed his association with England and prayed for her chastisement at the hands of the enemy. That hope sustained him through the first years of the war.

Hussein Rushdi Pasha, regent and prime minister, was terribly perplexed. In common with all Egypt, he ardently desired to proclaim his country's neutrality : but he was not free to choose his own course. Behind him were marshalled the menacing bayonets of the army of occupation. His embarrassment was great. He was given no time for reflection ; he must declare himself at once either for or against the allied Powers. He looked vainly for support and advice. None was forthcoming. The Khedive was in Constantinople : members of the legislative assembly were scattered in the provinces. There was no loophole of escape. At one elbow stood the cool and resourceful Milne Cheetham, temporarily in charge of British diplomatic interests ; at the other Byng, commanding the forces in Egypt. Before the insistence of the two Englishmen, Rushdi yielded, and signed on the 5th August a decree that committed his country

irrevocably to war. There was no ambiguity about the provisions of this historic document : its authors had done their work thoroughly. The inhabitants of Egypt were required to break off all communications with the enemy, the naval and military forces of Great Britain were empowered to exercise the rights of war over all Egyptian ports and territories.

With the publication of this decree, His Majesty's government breathed more freely : for no man could predict where attack would come. War does not always follow the course prescribed by textbooks, and an unfriendly Egypt would menace the safety of the Suez Canal. Allied shipping might then be forced to pass round the continent of Africa, and Great Britain's supremacy at sea be largely neutralized. Europe, no doubt, had guaranteed the freedom of the canal at all times : but Germany had not observed analogous conventions in Europe, and there was no reason to suppose that she would respect others abroad. Rushdi's timely surrender relieved England of anxiety. It had been a critical moment. Another and more stubborn man might have met Cheetham with a blank refusal, and thrown both governments into confusion. England must then have found a new and more amenable prime minister, or have governed Egypt without one. Either alternative was awkward. In the circumstances there was little chance of persuading any one of Rushdi's colleagues to come forward as a candidate, and Turkey, whose neutrality was a paramount need, would have protested violently against the second expedient. From making a choice between these evils, Cheetham's adroit manœuvring saved his country. Less praise can be given to Rushdi's sense of generalship. He was constrained to yield, no doubt : but he should have required compensation for the surrender. He made no such stipulation.[1]

Rushdi was a better administrator than statesman, and it was well for Egypt that a capable man sat in the prime

[1] It is right to say that admirers of Rushdi have constantly asserted the contrary. They speak of understandings and undertakings given and received during these days. Vague and unrecorded promises were perhaps made : but no agreement was ever published, nor could Rushdi produce any authoritative document to support his contention.

minister's chair at this desperate moment. At the first whisper of war, panic seized upon the business community. Every timid soul hurried to his bank clamouring for gold, and refusing payment in paper. Rushdi was firm enough here. He declared the note issue of the National Bank to be legal tender and inconvertible, he followed up that notice by proclaiming a suspension of current commercial operations. The two measures stopped confusion, and set free the government to legislate upon other subjects no less urgent. The food question was one. Already its export had been forbidden, and tariff commissions set up in various centres to regulate prices. But a broader outlook was necessary : for Egypt, once a granary of the world, no longer produced sufficient foodstuffs to feed herself.[1] Cotton had driven cereals out of cultivation. It was pretty obvious that Egypt would soon feel the pinch. She had no shipping of her own to carry cargoes of wheat, she could depend no longer upon Russia, and other old sources of supply. There were thus only two courses open to her : to diminish consumption or to increase production. The first was out of Rushdi's power to accomplish. Rationing implies the use of cards, and cards are only practicable in countries that, unlike Egypt, have reached a certain stage of literacy. The alternative was the obvious and practical remedy, provided that the production of cereals would pay the cultivator. Unhappily the early procedure of local tariff commissions did not encourage this hope. The consumer was generally in a majority on them, and usually indifferent to the claims of the producer. But the latter had his own ways of returning that inattention. He withdrew his grain from all markets that discriminated against him, and awaited the advent of a more propitious day. The tariff commission had no weapon in their armour against this manœuvre, and individual consumers soon discovered that they must either pay the seller's

[1] In 1913, Egypt imported 260,000 tons of wheat and flour or approximately one-third of her requirements. The cultivated area of Egypt has probably shrunk. His Highness Prince Omar Tussun in an instructive article, *The Population of Ancient Egypt* (published in the issue of the *Egyptian Gazette*, 30th December, 1927), places that area in Pharaonic times at 6,000,000 feddans, or half a million more than to-day.

price, or go without. It took four years to drive into the Egyptian mind that in war the producer has the whiphand of the consumer. But in these early days, the government had hopes of persuading agriculturists to plant more cereals in their own interest. War had stopped the sale of cotton, and part of the 1914 crop still lay rotting in the ground. The immediate future was equally unpromising. Half the spindles of England were idle : Germany and Austria were no longer buyers. It seemed in short safe to say that the demand for Egyptian cotton would continue to diminish, until Europe laid aside the sword. That theory was sufficient in itself to suggest the wisdom of reducing cotton production : but the government had a second and more potent argument still up their sleeve. Egyptian cotton had deteriorated both in quality and in yield. If saturation of the soil was considered to be the main cause of the decline, expert opinion held that excessive production was a contributory factor. Biennial planting had become the rule, and only a few enlightened agriculturists recognized the need of a longer rotation. No fellah, however bigoted, could deny the truth of that reasoning, and sulkily enough the country prepared to submit to the sacrifice. But the government were too drastic. There were loud cries of protest, and yielding to the clamour, they hastily amended the original decree.[1]

But food was not the only pre-occupation of the Egyptian council of ministers at this moment. The budget was another. Receipts from customs and railways had gone down with a run, and payments of the land tax had fallen into arrear. It was abundantly clear as early as September that revenue would not balance expenditure. The outlook was gloomy : for Egypt, hampered by treaties and commercial conventions, can neither raise loans nor exploit new sources of revenue. Drastic reduction of expenditure was therefore the only alternative, and the government scrutinized closely every item. Progress on buildings and irrigation work was

[1] The first decree, 20th September, 1914, forbade cotton cultivation in Upper Egypt, limited it in the Delta to 1,000,000 feddans, and restricted individual growers to one-fourth of their total holdings. A second decree dated the 30th October withdrew the restriction on the Delta, and permitted an individual to cultivate one-third of his holding.

stopped, credits for maintenance were cancelled or curtailed. The procedure partially restored equilibrium : but there were still the land tax arrears to be considered. It was a delicate matter. On the one hand the State could not pass over default, lest other taxpayers also claimed immunity, or distrain the cattle and crops lest the debtor became permanently impoverished : on the other hand the cultivator was clearly unable to pay, until he had marketed his cotton. Searching for a solution to these problems, the ministry of finance hit upon a sensible procedure. It made cash advances to the fellahin of the more distressed areas, and it reverted to the ancient custom of accepting its dues in kind.

More difficult to resolve were the relations of the executive to the legislative assembly. Lord Kitchener in drafting the organic law of the previous year had not contemplated a state of war in Egypt, and members of the assembly due to meet in November, were preparing to call ministers to account for their legislation since the outbreak of war. The government could decline, no doubt, to reply : but if experience was a guide, that privilege was more nominal than real. The opposition had early found ways and means of extracting information from the most stubborn minister, and Rushdi was not prepared to submit himself and his colleagues to a repetition of the ordeal. So he forestalled it by delaying the meeting of the assembly for two months. But in his heart he knew that the expedient would not silence Zaghlul and his supporters in the chamber. There was no provision of the organic law that forbade deputies to meet in private, elect a chairman, and call the executive to task. Such a campaign would inevitably excite public feeling, and Rushdi was determined to preserve order. He promulgated therefore a law, which made the assembling of five or more persons without permission of authority, unlawful. It was an adroit manœuvre : for it took the wind out of the sails of Zaghlul's ship. But protests came fast from every quarter, and Egypt was furious with her prime minister for daring to stifle expression of opinion. Yet Rushdi knew what he was about. He could not, as prime ministers in other countries had done successfully, appeal to the patriotism of the nation to spare him from attack : the legislative assembly's answer to the prayer would be a very different one. Egypt might

excuse him for abandoning her neutrality: but she could not condone his repressive laws and decrees later. In her judgment the prime minister had betrayed his country, and she awaited an opportunity to indict him with the offence. The suspension of the legislative assembly, no doubt, was an arbitrary measure; but Rushdi had no other alternative. He could not afford to be a target for criticism at this moment. Turkey was meditating attack upon the Suez Canal, and Egypt about to become a theatre of war.

The entry of Turkey into the war was no accident: Germany had planned and willed it so. It was her most signal diplomatic success during this period, and since alliance of these two Powers profoundly modified relations between England and Egypt it may not be out of place to indicate how Germany accomplished the achievement. The story goes back to the closing years of last century, when the partitioning of the world into political and commercial spheres of influence took place. England and France had headed the scramble, and Germany, a younger and less experienced competitor, was outstripped in the race. Egypt and Morocco were already in the hands of England and France, Persia was passing under the control of Russia, the South Seas under that of the United States, and China and Japan were in practice neutralized. There remained only Turkey in Asia, and upon that territory the German trader cast a speculative eye. It offered a promising field for his surplus production, and German diplomacy backed the campaign. But others were already in the field, and the Englishman in particular fought hard to retain his place. It was then that Berlin counterstruck, hinting that she would join France in obstructing England in Egypt, unless the latter admitted the right of Germany to exploit Asia Minor. Cromer, consulted on the point, was in despair. He could cope with the opposition of France and her ally Russia: but the reinforcement of those two Powers by Germany would make his position intolerable. With reluctance Lord Rosebery, then prime minister, yielded to Cromer's appeal. The reconstruction of Egypt went on, and British prestige in Turkey from that hour declined.[1]

[1] See Vol. II, *Twenty-five Years*, by Viscount Grey of Fallodon. (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1925.)

It was a slow process, and nothing in the first years of the present century indicated that British ascendency in Constantinople had passed its zenith. England still accounted herself the most favoured friend and trusted counsellor of the Sultan's government. Disputes about Egypt, a province of the Ottoman Empire, had not impaired these relations : [1] nor did decline begin, until the rise of the young Turks to power. Great Britain could not approve of their ideals or their conduct of government, and said so frankly. Her protest would have been more effective, had other Powers joined in it. But Russia and France, preoccupied with their own business, stood aloof, and Germany was extending to the committee of union and progress a hand of friendship. It was warmly grasped. Turkish fortunes had sunk to a low ebb. Bit by bit her territory and spheres of influence were passing into the hands of others. Egypt, Algeria and Morocco were gone and Italy was casting a covetous eye upon Tripoli. Austria had annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Christian population of Turkey in Europe were clamouring for emancipation. There broke out a series of campaigns disastrous to Ottoman arms. Ill trained and ill commanded, the Sultan's troops gave way, until Constantinople itself was threatened. Then profiting from that lesson, the young Turk examined the causes of his military failure. They were obvious enough, and Germany obligingly agreed to repair them. A military mission arrived ostensibly to advise the ministry of war as a British naval mission were doing at the ministry of marine. But Germany in fact was aiming at more than tendering advice, and in January, 1914, the British, Russian and French embassies were startled by the news that Liman von Sanders had taken over executive command of the army corps stationed in the capital. The three Powers refused to submit to the violation of an unwritten law, which hitherto had governed all European missions in Turkey, and Enver,

[1] The Akaba dispute is an instance in point. In the spring of 1906, the Ottoman government removing boundary marks, pushed their patrols into southern Sinai under pretext that the firman of the 8th April, 1892, gave them that right. Great Britain could not accept an interpretation that threatened the Suez Canal, and called upon Constantinople to withdraw the force, or accept the consequences of refusal.

minister of war, was sternly requested to cancel his order. He did so with a bad grace : he never pardoned the insult.

Before a shot had been fired in Europe, Turkey mobilized. The measure was lightly described as precautionary : it was in fact a gesture of defiance. For on the same day, the 2nd August, Turkey and Germany entered into an offensive and defensive alliance.[1] The covenant was a triumph for Germany. It struck at Russia by closing the Dardanelles to her commercial shipping, it alarmed England by making land attack upon the Suez Canal possible. Turkey had less cause to rejoice. She was not at that moment in urgent need of an ally, and the terms of the alliance hinted at no reward for her sacrifices. Great Britain and France were not threatening her territory, nor supporting Russia in a design upon the Dardanelles. It may even be doubted whether von Wangenheim and Enver would have succeeded in overcoming the scruples of Said Halim, always advocate of peace, but for Great Britain's seizure of a Turkish battleship completing construction on the Tyne. The vessel was lying at her moorings awaiting the arrival of a crew, when the Admiralty clapped a guard on board. The act aroused loud and violent protests in Constantinople, and the Ottoman government bent to the storm. To add this monster dreadnought to their navy, the young Turk had pared and scraped for years. The sacrifice had been in vain, and with the loss of the ship departed the hope of humbling presumptuous Greece. The Ottoman government would listen neither to excuse nor apology, and incontinently flung themselves into the arms of the German.

Then began in Constantinople a duel of wits between Malet the British ambassador, and Said Halim the Grand

[1] Signed at Therapia by Von Wangenheim, the German ambassador, and Said Halim, the Grand Vizier, the two plenipotentiaries. The text may be found in *Die dèutschen dockumente zum Kriegausbruch*, 1914 (Herausgeben im Auftrager, des Auswartzen Amtes, 4 volumes, 1919), or in the American translation *Outbreak of the World War*, by Karl Kautsky (Oxford University Press, 1924). The existence of the convention, contrary to the advice of Von Moltke, was kept secret until Herr Zimmermann, under secretary of state for foreign affairs, announced it in the Reichstag on the 12th May, 1916. (See *Modern Turkey*, by E. W. Mears, MacMillan, New York, 1924.)

Vizier. The opponents were unequally matched: for Malet was ignorant of Germany's covenant with Turkey. He engaged in fruitless and interminable conversations to the advantage of the other, who was playing for time to allow Enver to complete his mobilization. Meanwhile Malet's situation grew daily more difficult. The two German cruisers, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, after an adventurous promenade in the Mediterranean, rode now at anchor in the quiet waters of the Bosphorus, and German naval ratings and munitions were pouring into Constantinople by train. The war also was going badly on the French front. Brussels and Antwerp were in the enemy's hands, and Paris was beleaguered. The neutrality of Turkey became therefore a matter of supreme importance, and Malet was instructed to promise as the price of it, the integrity of Ottoman dominion, and economic assistance in Asia Minor.[1] It was too late. The two German warships sailed into the Black Sea, and the ministry of war was despatching heavy reinforcements to the army in Syria. Reluctantly the Allies took up the challenge, and broke off diplomatic relations.

The rupture was definite, and General Sir John Maxwell, in command of Egypt, prepared for war. His selection had been a happy thought on the part of the British government. He knew the virtues and failings of the Egyptian people, he was artful enough to turn them to his account. The command was no sinecure. Attack was impending from without, disaffection brewing within. But Maxwell was always remarkable for his abundant common-sense, and he saw the importance of persuading Egypt that a state of war did not connote a military despotism. His discretion was quickly repaid: the news that Turkey had entered the war hardly excited remark. It was what he had expected: he did not believe that Egyptians could so lightly forget the moral of their former subjection to this Power. But he was also aware of the swift and unexpected changes that overwhelm opinion, and experience bade him beware of the moment when Egypt would recall the fact that the Sultan of Turkey was also caliph of the Mohammedan world. Nor could he afford to take a risk. Constantinople was planning

[1] Despatch of the secretary of state for foreign affairs to the British ambassador in Turkey, dated 22nd August, 1914.

attack upon the Suez Canal, and civil administration in all theatres of war must give way to military. There was no other alternative before him in short, but to declare martial law.

The announcement shocked society. It had a sinister sound: it conveyed a menace of actual hostilities. That impression was not altogether effaced by Maxwell's second proclamation three days later, that Great Britain undertook the defence of Egypt, without calling upon her people for assistance. The educated Egyptian was uncertain of the value of that promise, and his doubts were soon justified. The proclamation had hardly been published before detachments of the Egyptian army were in position on the Suez Canal. It is well to admit frankly that the promise should never have been given. Human intelligence could not at that period predict the course and consequences of this great war. And suspicion was heightened by the knowledge that Great Britain was contemplating a revision of her relations with Egypt. Peace had sufficiently emphasized the anomalies of a military occupation: war with Turkey made their continuance impossible. The British government had to defend Egypt against invasion, and provide her inhabitants with another nationality. Public opinion did not contest the justice of these contentions, or that Great Britain must reinforce her armies in Egypt. But if opinion accepted these premises as the consequences of Turkey's entrance into the war, it challenged the right of Great Britain to take advantage of the accident, and to claim suzerain powers over Egypt. His Majesty's government hesitated for some weeks upon their course. It was impossible to leave matters as they were. The Khedive had thrown in his lot with the enemy: [1] a successor must be appointed, a new form

[1] In the spring of 1927, Rushdi published a statement intended to convince the public that His Highness remained in Constantinople at his own wish. Rushdi declared that as a result of his protest, the British government left the Khedive free to go where he wished. This was early in August, 1914. But Abbas Hilmi hesitated, perhaps unable to get away from Constantinople, perhaps speculating upon Great Britain's ultimate defeat. And according to Rushdi, in place of returning at once to Egypt he asked for information as to the attitude of his subjects towards the war. It is right to say that the Khedive later published a denial of Rushdi's statement.

of government imposed. Annexation and autonomy seemed alike impracticable. The first would promote suspicion among neutrals, disorder in Egypt : the second would add another anxiety to Great Britain's heavy burden. Between these two extremes stood a protectorate. It was not a wholly satisfactory alternative : it perpetuated many of the anomalies that had hampered the British administrator in the past, it was at variance with the pledges offered by successive British cabinets before and after the occupation. On the 19th December, therefore, His Majesty's government declared a protectorate, and invited Prince Hussein Pasha Kamil to become Sultan of Egypt. It was a document[1] composed in the old style : grandiose and verbose, inferring much, promising little. Mention was made of Great Britain's intention to revise the capitulations, and something was said of her ambition to associate the governed with the task of government : but beyond those vague undertakings, there was no hint that England proposed to compensate Egypt later for the sacrifice, or that British ministers were aware of the unpopularity of the occupation. But the mind of the new Sultan was easy on both points. In inviting Rushdi to continue in office, he took occasion to remark that the protectorate would remove misunderstanding, and repair domestic differences. It was a prediction more optimistic than accurate : Rushdi, better informed, made no comment upon it. Thus twice within six months did Providence provide the prime minister with opportunity of profiting from England's difficulty, and twice he failed to seize, or perhaps perceive it. The chance did not come again his way.

Meanwhile Jemal Pasha had started for the Egyptian front. He was full of hope. To his friends he cried, "I shall not return until I have entered Cairo." It was the typical attitude of a young Turk. Of the units of the fourth army forming in Syria and Palestine, no one of them was ready for the field : munitions and supplies were both lacking. Nor was it easy for Constantinople to provide them. Rail communication between the Bosphorus and Syria was broken by the Taurus and Amanus ranges, farther south transport and troops must proceed by tracks hardly worthy

[1] See Appendix II.

of the name of roads.[1] Thus despite prodigious exertion Jemal in the first week of January, 1915, could muster no more than 30,000 rifles at Beersheba, the advanced base of the expeditionary force. It was a slender army for his purpose, the weaker from the fact that Jemal felt little confidence in half his force. They were Arabs inspired with ideals different from those of the young Turk, and a less sanguine leader would have hesitated before he took the field at their head. Moreover his route lay through Sinai, an inhospitable region dominated in the south by lofty and confused mountain ranges, in the north by a bare limestone plateau sloping gently down to the sea. Into this bleak and barren land few travellers care to penetrate. There is nothing to discover, nothing to explore. Swept by bitter winds in the winter, scorched by torrid suns in the summer, the peninsular offers neither food nor shelter to man or beast. Wells are few and far between : but now and again heavy rain falls, and fills hollows and rocked cisterns. This phenomenon occurred in the early winter of 1914–15, and decided Jemal's route. He abandoned the sea coast, the traditional road of armies, and marched across the heart of the peninsula. The advance guard left Beersheba on the 11th January : eighteen days later the expeditionary force [2] halted by the pools of Er Rigm within striking distance of the canal. In that short space of time, Jemal had transported troops, heavy guns, pontoons, rafts and stores across 140 miles of trackless desert. It was something of an achievement.

Opposing him were two divisions of Indian troops, supported by an Anglo-French naval squadron in the canal : a force more than sufficient for the defence of the channel. Strictly speaking neither the troops nor the warships had any business in a zone, which the convention of the 29th October, 1888, had declared to be neutral. It had taken

[1] For description of Turkish lines of communication, see the author's history of the years of war in Egypt (Chapter VI, *Egypt and the Army*, Oxford University Press, 1924), and the chapter by Captain Merkel, Chief of Staff German lines of communication, in the *Jahrbuch des Bundes in Asien Kampfer* (Leipsic, 1921).

[2] Organized in two echelons. The first consisted of 16,642 all ranks, 968 horses, 2,000 camels, five field and one 15-centimetre howitzer batteries. The second echelon was composed mainly of transport.

France prolonged negotiations in the past to bring England to that point. The latter was willing enough to join in guaranteeing the freedom of the canal at all times to the shipping of every flag, but she insisted upon the Khedive being charged with the execution of the guarantee. France would not consent to this stipulation, and ambassadors and plenipotentiaries wrangled and disputed over the divergence for three years. Great Britain could afford to wait. Supremacy at sea gave her command of the terminal ports of the canal, and an army of occupation in Egypt that of its banks : and though France finally persuaded the British government to sign the convention, they did so only on the understanding that their point of view held good, so long as the occupation of Egypt continued. That reserve vanished at the burial of all Anglo-French differences in 1904, and the Suez canal convention became operative upon Great Britain in common with other Powers from that date. But if on the outbreak of war the allies violated the text of that convention, there is something to be said on their behalf. The convention had not contemplated the invasion of Egypt by one or more of the signatories, nor that the shipping of belligerents would make use of Suez canal waters as a safe and convenient refuge from attack. It must in short be admitted that Great Britain and France did actually ignore the provisions of the convention : on the other hand, neither of the two Powers forbade navigation to enemy shipping, nor made improper use of their navy and military forces, until Jemal's concentration in Palestine forced them to do so.

Description of the fighting that occurred on the 3rd and 4th February, 1915, opposite Ismailia is outside the plan of this history. Of it no more need be said here than that the attack failed,[1] and Jemal hastily retraced his steps. His intelligence service had been sadly at fault. It allowed him to believe that the defence was both negligent and weak,

[1] *The Official History of the War* (Vol. I, Egypt and Palestine), *L'Attaque du Canal de Suez*, by Lieutenant de Vaisseau Georges Douin, and *L'Attaque et la Defense du Canal de Suez*, by Paul Chack (Revue de deux mondes, Paris, December, January and February issues, 1926) give excellent accounts. From the other side, the student will find an account in Jemal's *Memories of a Turkish Statesman*, Ali Bey Fuad's *The Egyptian Expedition*, and *Zwischen Kaukasus und Sinai* (Vol. I).

and that the inhabitants of Egypt would take it in rear. Neither conjecture had any foundation. General Wilson commanding the Canal defence force, had correctly anticipated the Turkish tactics, the people of Egypt had listened unmoved to the appeal of the Sultan of Turkey. The declaration of a Holy War excited no interest, and the news of the attack upon the canal provoked more indignation than sympathy. It was one matter to desire the defeat of England in Europe, and another to wish it in Egypt. The Turk sank in public esteem by his violation of Egyptian territory, and Egypt on the whole was enormously relieved to learn of his reverse. The pendulum, in short, was swinging back. Hostility towards Great Britain grew less pronounced, as the country realized that she had kept her word, and saved Egypt from the horrors of war. The politician and the student struggled to keep the old passion, but their words were wasted. Nor had Egypt reason as yet to complain of martial law. Maxwell used it sparingly, and to the advantage of the country at large.[1] It supplemented the civil administration : it made no attempt to override the latter. The army bought its supplies in the open market, and Egypt was the richer by the presence of so many troops on her soil. Agriculture had begun to look up again and cotton was finding a market. The fellah had no more need to borrow. There was plenty of money about, and an abundant maize crop put even the consumer at ease. The Egyptian ministers were equally content with the state of affairs. War, paradoxically enough, had restored the authority they had acquired under Gorst, and partially lost under Kitchener. There was no more criticism of their acts. The legislative assembly was indefinitely adjourned, the High Commissioner and the advisers were occupied in carrying out the wishes of military authority. The press was carefully watched and news that reflected upon the conduct of the Egyptian administration was summarily expunged. The censor permitted few references to the protectorate, and journalists who transgressed the spirit of that ruling, were sharply taken to task. Almost it seemed in these quiet days, as if Egypt had forgotten her entanglement in the war. A High Commissioner had taken the place of an

[1] Notably in the drink and drug traffic.

Agent and consul-general, and Egypt had suppressed her ministry of foreign affairs.[1] Otherwise the protectorate was indistinguishable from the occupation.

In the varying fortunes of the campaign on Gallipoli, Egypt displayed only faint interest: indifferent apparently whether victory fell to British or Turkish arms. Even reports of a projected attack upon Alexandria by the Senussi, wild and restless religious nomads of the western desert, hardly excited attention. Of this religious fraternity, the Egyptian knew little beyond the fact that its members followed austere habits of life, and practised blind obedience to the teaching of Islam. Mohammed Ben Senussi had founded the sect at Fez about the year 1830, his son had extended his father's authority to Darfur and to Lake Tchad. There Sidi Ahmed, the grandson, met with a check in the early summer of 1914, and retreated hastily eastward. Throughout the winter Turkey was endeavouring to persuade the Senussi to attack Egypt: but their leader hesitated, expecting a counter offer from Great Britain. None came, and in the autumn of 1915 his patience being exhausted, Sidi Ahmed stepped over the Egyptian frontier. It was a gesture of defiance, and Maxwell prepared to meet it.[2] The short campaign that followed pricked the Senussi bubble for ever. The fraternity was less formidable than travellers and missionaries had led the Christian world to expect. Sidi Ahmed could concentrate no more than 5,000 rifles, and the expected assistance from Turkey did not come. Though he and his followers fought gallantly for a while, they were driven from point to point, until at Agagia, on the 26th February, 1926, General Peyton put an end to the menace.

But Sinai was still in the enemy's hands, and throughout 1915 Maxwell made no attempt to dispossess the Turk. He has been unfairly blamed for that neglect, and little

[1] The British Agent and consul-general addressed on the 24th November, 1914, a circular note to the representatives in Cairo of the Powers, stating that communications with the Egyptian government must in future pass through him.

[2] It must be said that Italy was pressing the British government to crush the Senussi. Under the Pact of London the 26th April, 1915, Italy on entering the war, reserved all her rights and privileges over Libya.

regard paid to his circumstances. He was in fact never in a position to take the initiative. Except for the two Indian divisions on the canal, his troops were mostly untrained and untried, and the Dardanelles, Mesopotamia and other theatres of war made heavy calls upon them. Moreover if he held strictly to a passive defence of the Suez Canal, he was at least following the pre-war ideals of the Imperial General Staff.[1] Conditions in short forbid passing judgment upon Maxwell's capacity for leadership in the field, and so much may properly be said in answer to his critics. Throughout his term of command in Egypt he was condemned to the more humdrum task of administration, and of his conduct of it during the critical months of 1914, nothing but praise can be said. But the war had yet to be won, and bold spirits at home, contemplating with dissatisfaction the stalemate in France, urged the need of thrusting at the enemy elsewhere. Egypt seemed an ideal base for such an operation, and Lord Kitchener's prediction that the victory would come in the East [2] was recalled. The losses and cost of Gallipoli were forgotten. Salonica, East Africa and Mesopotamia were not enough, and a fourth expeditionary force was created, and despatched to Egypt. Divisions were taken out of the line in France and brigaded with the troops evacuated from Gallipoli. Thus in the first days of January, 1916, three army corps lay astride of the Suez Canal, a line that two divisions a year before had been considered strong enough to hold. It was not very intelligible strategy : for Jemal's army in Sinai had melted down to an insignificant force of 7,000 rifles. Maxwell's own position became impossible. There was already in Egypt a second general officer holding an independent command,[3] and Sir A. Murray, commanding the forces on the canal, now made a third. Egypt was not

[1] On the 13th March, 1914, the General Staff indicated that "the strategical line of defence in Egypt is clearly the line of the Suez Canal." It went on to add that two cavalry brigades and two infantry divisions should be in a position to deal with any Turkish force crossing the peninsula.

[2] Before Great Britain entered the war, Kitchener ventured upon three forecasts : first that the Germans would attack through Belgium, secondly that the war would last three years, and thirdly that it would be won in the east.

[3] The Levant Base, a "Q" organization.

large enough to contain three stars of such magnitude, and Maxwell very sensibly resigned. Egyptians heard the news of his impending departure with regret. He had earned the respect and confidence of the entire community,[1] and the tranquillity of the country after eighteen months of war, was sufficient testimony to the wisdom and prudence of his administration.

Murray, inspired with identical ideals, was without knowledge of Egypt and her people. He had come to make war, not to keep her inhabitants in good humour. The command of the air [2] and the destruction of the enemy's water supply was his first business, the collection of labour and transport the second, and the expulsion of the Turk from Sinai the third. Insensibly martial law assumed a more forbidding character. Its application was enlarged, its procedure became harsher : a military court judged offenders and punishment followed hard upon the offence. Egypt was counted henceforth less a friend, more as a potential enemy. It was a dismal business for the Egyptian prime minister. He had no wish to impede military authority, much less to run counter to its wishes. Already he had marked his good faith by putting at the disposal of the commander-in-chief all the resources of his country : now with his concurrence members of the civil service tumbled over one another in their desire to help. Without his and their aid, Murray could not have proceeded far with his plans. They were twofold : first he proposed to make the Suez Canal impregnable, and secondly to drive out the enemy from Sinai. The Egyptian government lent a willing hand. The public works, the state railways, the police and the army gave up their staff and plant to the Expeditionary force, and the civilian population bore with the inconvenience uncomplainingly. Through the assistance of Egypt, Murray was able to construct a line of redoubts connected by light railways and roads, that effectually protected the east bank of the

[1] In bidding General Maxwell farewell, the Sultan Hussein wrote as follows : "*Tous les Egyptiens, mon gouvernement et moi-même nous ne pouvons que dire de tout cœur : merci.*"

[2] The enemy bombed the Canal zone from the air unmercifully during the first three months of 1916. For account of these raids see *Als Kampfflieger am Suez Canal*, by Dr. Hans Hentleberg (Verlag August Scheri, Berlin, 1919).

canal from enemy raids, and to plan a broad-gauge railway and a water-pipe line across the breadth of the peninsula. The two last were stupendous undertakings : but by midsummer, the work upon both was sufficiently advanced to permit the concentration of two divisions of infantry, one of cavalry and a strong labour corps at Romani, thirty miles to the east of Port Said. There Kress von Kressenstein, a German artillery officer, commanding the enemy's forces in Sinai, swooped down upon General Lawrence. There was heavy fighting : but the result was never in doubt, and pursued by Chetwode, and the mounted division, von Kressenstein fell back upon El Arish. Driven out of that village, he took refuge in Gaza, and Egyptian territory was clear of the enemy. Allenby, succeeding Murray in the summer of 1917, carried the offensive into Palestine. But these operations required a larger army and large auxiliary services, and demands for Egyptian assistance grew more imperious. The modest cavalry division at the disposal of Murray had expanded into an army corps, the camel transport service had grown almost into another, and the fodder requirements of both had proportionately increased. The Egyptian cultivator did not respond to the appeal. He disapproved of the prices offered by the army, and disliked its tiresome procedure. His reluctance to sell, however natural, was unfortunate. Unable to obtain its needs in the open market, military authority resorted to requisition. Produce and animals were forcibly seized, and sent to the front. Labour had been recruited in a similar way for some months, and though Egyptian ministers had been urged time and again to distribute the burden equitably over the whole population, they had hesitated to comply. To do so in their judgment would imply that Egypt therewith absolved Great Britain from her promise to undertake sole charge of the war.[1] They were too wary to fall into the trap, too little themselves in love with the protectorate to go beyond their original offer. They preferred to ignore the practice of requisition, manifoldly unjust and vicious in its incidence,

[1] The proclamation of General Maxwell dated 6th November, 1914. "Great Britain takes upon herself the sole burden of the present war, without calling upon the Egyptian people for aid therein."

rather than accept responsibility for a less barbarous alternative.[1]

There was no longer any concealment about the facts. Every mudir was required to produce monthly from his province a fixed number of able-bodied men, or answer for the neglect: in return he was asked no inconvenient questions how he obtained his quota. It was the corvée unashamedly reintroduced. Fellahin were seized on the highway and in the fields, and sent under escort to the army. Once there the recruits were well fed, well paid, and well treated: it was even said that they were content. But that was not so in fact. Fellahin returned to their villages, cherishing resentment and brooding over vengeance. Requisition spared the notable and his dependants the worst of its evils. Their labour usually escaped the recruiting agent's eye, their crops the notice of local authority. But the turn of these individuals was coming, and the military net closing over them also. A new arms act was hastily drafted. Under its provisions, every Egyptian, irrespective of rank and station,[2] was summarily required to surrender his weapons to the police. Had the order been made in the interests of public security it might have passed without comment: but the preamble frankly and clearly confessed the decree to have been framed as a general measure of disarmament. The necessity was not very obvious. There seemed no reason at that moment to apprehend outbreak of disorder, much less a general rising. Egypt, though moody and restless, was still quiet enough. It would have been more prudent, had the prime minister taken his courage in hand, and boldly denounced the act as a rash and irritating interference with Egyptian habits. There was little reason to suppose that the provisions could be enforced. In Egypt the respectable householder does not move about defenceless, lest calamity befall him, and the evil-doer will not surrender the implements of his trade. It was so on this occasion. No man took steps to obey the decree, and long before the police made their search, the owner had buried his firearms out of

[1] For further detail of the war grievances of Egypt, see Chapter XV, *Egypt and the Army*.

[2] 17th May, 1917. Only members of the reigning dynasty and civil servants were excepted from its terms.

sight. The measure widened the rift between military authority and the civilian population: but beyond that unwelcome result it accomplished nothing.

The towns were as impatient and discontented as the country. Salaries and wages had not kept pace with the cost of living, and the proletariat were beginning to feel the pangs of hunger. There was just food enough to go round, but its price was often beyond the purchasing power of the consumer, and rather than sell at the latter's figure, the producer stored his crops against a better day. The government were slow in looking ahead. They kept labour on pre-war rates of pay,[1] and they permitted quantities of cereals to leave the country, until a short maize crop in the autumn of 1916 recalled them to their senses. Then ministers hastily forbade the export of foodstuffs, and put under cultivation tracts of virgin soil. These measures, useful enough had they been undertaken a year earlier, were too late to assure confidence. The army had begun to buy heavily, and irrigation of land beyond the limits of the Nile flood cannot be improvised at a moment's notice. It would have been more prudent had the government again curtailed the cotton area, and simultaneously announced their readiness to purchase food and fodder crops at prices remunerative to the agriculturist. The procedure would have been troublesome and costly, but cheaper in the long run than driving labour to despair, and obliging the army to resort to requisition.[2]

Without stopping to think, Egypt laid all her misfortunes at the door of the protectorate, and in her haste to condemn, she forgot that war does not always distinguish between allies and the enemy. The long and quiet rule of Cromer had robbed her of the capacity to support affliction, and she murmured bitterly against the burdens, which martial law piled upon her back. There was no one to listen to the tale of her grievance. The Sultan and his ministers,

[1] Private employers naturally followed the lead of the government. Meagre allowances granted by the latter to the daily paid employee, did little to relieve the general misery.

[2] It must be said that under Article 3 of a proclamation defining the application of martial law, dated 2nd November, 1914, military authority preserved the right of requisitioning property.

the High Commissioner and his lieutenants were dancing in company to a tune called by a commander-in-chief campaigning two hundred miles away. They deplored but could not alter the conditions. Egyptian and British officials were alike the sport of circumstances. It has been sometimes said that the latter neglected his duty at this stage, in that he did not stand between martial law and its victims. The reproach is undeserved. War had sadly thinned the ranks of the Anglo-Egyptian civil service, and its members were now too few in number to survey a whole administration. Many of the younger and a sprinkling of the older officials were in the firing line, the rest were in charge of side issues inseparable from war. Censor and intelligence duties claimed some, war trading and registration duties others. There were not, in short, enough Englishmen to go round. The High Commissioner's position was still more delicate. His relations with the sovereign of Egypt or with the commander-in-chief were never clearly defined: government was largely carried on by martial law, and the High Commissioner's opinion was not always invited.[1] Sir Henry McMahon had held the appointment during the first two years of the war. His name was unknown in Egypt, and his selection came as a surprise to her. She examined his credentials, and found them short of those that Kitchener, Gorst and Cromer had possessed. His reputation no doubt stood high enough in India: to Egyptians that fact was of little account, and they welcomed him without enthusiasm. Sir Reginald Wingate, who replaced McMahon in December, 1916, was better known. He had been sirdar of the army and governor-general of the Sudan for sixteen years, and he had a multitude of friends in Egypt. But he had not been in Cairo since 1914, and he found life strangely changed. His predecessor had let control of the administration slip out of his hands, and Wingate never recovered command. It was a misfortune: for he was experienced in men and affairs. And in Sultan Hussein he had a loyal partner, and a trusty friend: a sovereign who governed with prudence and wisdom. The death of this prince in the

[1] In 1917 he advised His Majesty's government to entrust him with the administration of martial law. The request was rejected. (See page 367 (Vol I.) *Official History of the War.*)

autumn of 1917 was a grievous calamity for England no less than for Egypt.

As the war drew to its end, Egypt was cheered by President Wilson's encouraging words to the smaller nations of the world, and educated men spoke hopefully of the approach of brighter days. Talk ran upon the prospects of Great Britain investing Egypt with a measure of independence on the return of peace, and defying the law that forbade public meetings, Egyptians came together and discussed behind closed doors how they could take advantage of Wilson's message. There were many opinions : no two men could agree upon what they should ask from England, or upon what England was likely to give. Thus, when armistice was declared, Egypt was without a programme, or a leader. Forty-eight hours later Saad Pasha Zaghlul had pointed the way to both.

PART IV. INDEPENDENCE

CHAPTER XII

CONFUSION

On the 13th November, 1918, Zaghlul Pasha knocked at the door of the residency. He was one of three Egyptians chosen by a group of notables to express the humiliation that Egypt suffered from the protectorate. It has been said that Zaghlul on this occasion claimed no more than a modest measure of autonomy. It was not so : for though he was willing to concede to Great Britain the right of occupying the Suez Canal when threatened with attack, and to accept her control of the public debt, he spoke unhesitatingly of complete independence. None the less the High Commissioner recommended his government to permit these Egyptians to state their arguments in London. That advice was based upon excellent reasoning. Wingate knew very well that Zaghlul by no means represented Egypt, and he foresaw that the departure of this deputation would be followed by others. His anticipation was correct. Before His Majesty's government could reply, the residency was besieged by Egyptians, clamouring to be shown the same favour. The prime minister was among the first of the callers. Wingate would have let one and all go, and have thus removed all potential disturbers of peace. In his judgment Egypt's most urgent need at this moment was breathing time to forget her war grievances and settle down to peace. But the cabinet were not impressed by his argument : busy with the resettlement of Europe, neither the prime minister nor his foreign secretary had leisure to attend to Egypt. Moreover she appeared to have no substantial cause for grumbling, since war had benefited rather than injured

her.[1] The national debt stood at the pre-war figure, taxation had not been increased : the agriculturist had paid off his mortgages, the trader had grown fabulously rich. Nor had the country been harrowed by the sights of war. Turkish attacks on the east had been beaten back, the Senussi advance had been repelled, and Egypt had scarcely realized the menace of either. All this good fortune she owed exclusively to her association with England, and fortified by this reasoning, His Majesty's foreign secretary replied to the High Commissioner that no useful purpose would be served by the visit of private Egyptians to London, or of ministers, who expressed the desire to go.[2]

Zaghlul at once issued an appeal to the Powers. It was noteworthy, in that he formulated a definite claim. He demanded independence, partly because all nations had an inalienable right to their political freedom, partly because Egypt had enjoyed from Mohammed Ali onwards an autonomy little removed in practice from independence. Her geographical situation, her ancient history, and her present prosperity were additional arguments in favour of his claim. He and his associates stood for constitutional government, with special reserves to foreigners and their traditional interests in Egypt. Thus Zaghlul promised to respect the capitulations, and to accept foreign control of the public debt. He was also prepared to guarantee the neutrality of the Suez Canal, and to place Egypt under the protection, and even supervision, of the assembly of Nations. Wide as that programme was, it did not satisfy all Egyptians. The leaders of the old National party [3] accused Zaghlul roundly of his silence upon the protectorate, and of his omission to claim

[1] The financial adviser's note on the Budget, 1st April, 1920, placed the savings of Egypt between 1915 and 1919 at the substantial figure of £152,000,000, exclusive of reduction in liabilities. He made his calculation on the following basis : foreign investment by the State and public custodian £13,000,000, banknote issue, £65,000,000, public companies, £60,000,000, and individual investments, £14,000,000.

[2] See page 13, *Report of the Special Mission to Egypt.* (*Egypt No. 1, 1927.*)

[3] Both parties assumed the title of *Wafd*, or delegation. Zaghlul and his friends described themselves as the *Wafd El Masri*, or the delegation of Egypt : the National party spoke of themselves as *Wafd El Watani*, or the delegation of the nation. In the end, Zaghlul's party won, and Egypt spoke of it alone as the Wafd.

sovereignty over the Sudan. They protested against his attitude towards the capitulations, and objected to a foreign control of Egypt's public debt. In their judgment, no nation could admit such concessions without loss of dignity, and to surrender the claims of Egypt on these points, would imply a doubt of her fitness for self-government. Rushdi Pasha also had considered his position. It was certainly a little undignified. The British government would not receive him, and Zaghlul ignored him. So the prime minister looked about for a convenient loophole of escape. He found it in a memorandum expressing the views of Sir William Brunyate, the financial adviser, upon the future form of government in Egypt. Brunyate had succeeded Lord Edward Cecil in 1917. Of penetrating mind and laborious habits, Brunyate would have won distinction in any of the learned professions. Unhappily for his later reputation in Egypt, he passed finally into a branch of the public service foreign to his genius. To succeed in administration, a man must possess immense sympathy with imperfection, and inexhaustible patience with stupidity. Brunyate could offer little of the first, less of the second. He had come to Egypt at an early age, and entered the ministry of justice. There his merit quickly attracted notice, and Lord Cromer sent him to the Sudan to draft penal and civil codes, suitable for a backward people. Brunyate carried out the task, his first constructive piece of work, admirably. Later he became an accepted authority upon Egyptian capitulations, and public opinion warmly approved of his appointment as judicial adviser. War brought out the quality of his mind and his knowledge of international law. He displayed great skill in drafting proclamations and decrees : their phraseology was as lucid as the thought that inspired it. But in undertaking charge of finance as well as justice, Brunyate overtaxed his capacity. He was adviser to both ministries, he mediated between military authority and the Egyptian government, he represented the British treasury in its transactions with the cotton commission,[1] he

[1] This commission purchased on behalf of the British government the entire cotton crop of 1918. It was a transaction of some magnitude, admirably conceived, no less admirably carried out. Very prudently the two governments concerned left procedure in

guided the proceedings of the food control, and he directed the deliberations of commissions appointed to consider constitutional reform. These duties were among Brunyate's many and obvious occupations : others of equal complexity lay in the background. His perceptive mind, marking the growing democratic spirit of Europe, had noted its appeal to Egyptian minds. Over means of satisfying the legitimate hopes of Egyptians and the interests of Great Britain, he pondered long and profoundly, until fired with the laudable ambition of finding a solution, he addressed to the prime minister a memorandum on the subject.[1] The proposals were not entirely his own. A committee had been studying the subject for some months, and upon its conclusions Brunyate based his note. He chose an unlucky hour to publish it. Egypt, inflamed by the refusal of His Majesty's government to listen to her complaint, was in no mood to accept any form of government that denied her sovereignty over her own territories. But the memorandum gave Rushdi the opportunity he had been seeking. He had loyally and consistently supported Great Britain throughout the war, consenting to every sacrifice asked, requiring no concession in return. He was therefore profoundly disappointed with Brunyate's ideas, which he assumed inaccurately had been inspired from London. In place of a liberal measure of autonomy the financial adviser was offering a permanent condominium, wherein a mixed senate would override the wishes of a lower Egyptian chamber. Rushdi and his fellow ministers in short liked the proposal no better than their predecessors a dozen years ago had done that of Lord Cromer, and they permitted the memorandum to become public property. There at once arose a hubbub of indignant protest from all classes of the population, and Rushdi offered his resignation a second time.[2]

the hands of the trade, and both buyers and sellers were well content with that decision. Mr. Ralph Carver, of the firm Carver Bros., Mr. K. Birley of the firm Peel Bros., and Sir Bertram Hornsby, later governor of the national bank of Egypt, were the three commissioners.

[1] He outlined the creation of two legislative chambers : a Lower house of Egyptians, and an Upper of Europeans and Egyptians.

[2] 18th December. With great reluctance he withdrew his resignation, as he had done in the first instance, on being informed that His Majesty's ministers would receive him later.

Yet despite this unlucky accident, Wingate might have continued to dominate the situation, but for the disinclination of military authority to abdicate its powers under martial law. The army proceeded as if fighting still continued. Requisition of labour and supplies went on, restrictions upon the liberty of the private citizen remained in force. It was a disheartening reflection to those Egyptians, who desired to bury the gloomy memories of war: but in their minds they did not distinguish between armistice and peace. Warfare, it is true, had come to an abrupt ending, but the British forces deployed along a line stretching from Cairo into Asia Minor, could neither be withdrawn, nor exist without Egyptian assistance. In the confusion and excitement that prevailed, Egypt lost sight of these considerations. Her people were not the only individuals guilty of a curious myopia. The professional soldier, it must be said, was also slow to comprehend the irritation, which his presence aroused in the civilian mind. He need not be judged too harshly on that account: for war to him had become a permanent and natural state of the universe, and from that singular delusion he could not rid himself in a moment. But if military authority in Egypt does not wholly escape this indictment, it had at least one substantial excuse for delaying the restoration of normal conditions of life. Though danger from enemy action was gone, another menace had taken its place: there was some reason to believe that missionaries were at work in Egypt, propagating theories subversive to stable government and inimical to society. Even before the armistice was signed, vague reports indicated the presence of revolutionary agents in Alexandria and Port Said, and authority trembled lest Egypt should become contaminated with their doctrine. Nor could the British command abdicate authority over Egypt, until it had accomplished the despatch of the troops to their homes. During an operation of this type, discipline wears thin, and no prudent officer will take risks that he can avoid. The restrictions imposed by war must be continued in peace, until society and the army have re-established their old relations. That lesson Egypt had yet to learn.

The High Commissioner throughout December and January had become increasingly uneasy. He watched with

troubled eyes the growing hostility, and pressed his anxiety so persistently, that the cabinet ordered him to report in person in London. He was too late. The peace congress in Paris had begun its sittings, and no responsible British minister could find time to see him. Meanwhile Zaghlul had not been idle. He had noted his weakness, he was endeavouring to correct it. Through committees and agents, the people were urged to acknowledge him and his chosen associates, to be the official representatives of Egypt. The Sultan and his advisers were slow to recognize this threat to their authority, and too late they proclaimed this novel electoral campaign to be unlawful. Egypt, drunk with excitement and emotion, took no notice of that intimation. Zaghlul's name was on every man's lips, his election as the leader of the Wafd a foregone conclusion. Thenceforth there was only one party, only one programme. The news surprised, but did not disconcert the British government: they still credited the Egyptian people with sufficient patience to wait a few weeks.[1] It was not an improper expectation: but Egypt thought of it as a trick to evade the issue. In her belief she had already waited too long, and she knew of nothing more urgent than the adjustment of her relations with Great Britain. The country was the less prepared also to excuse delay by the knowledge that in Paris at that moment were the representatives of Arabia, Syria and even Cyprus.[2]

[1] The Foreign secretary in a courteously worded message earlier, had regretted that the cabinet through absence in Paris "would be unable to devote sufficient time and attention to problems of Egyptian internal reform," and in these conditions invited Rushdi Pasha to postpone his visit. The Milner Mission, commenting upon the incident, reports: "There were no doubt obvious difficulties in the way of discussing such questions with the Egyptian Ministers at a moment of high political pressure, when the Peace Conference was about to open, but it would appear that in spite of the insistency with which the High Commissioner appealed for their reception, the real urgency of dealing with the Egyptian problem at that critical moment had not been realized." (Page 13, *Egypt No. 1, 1921.*)

[2] The Anglo-French declaration regarding the future of Syria and Mesopotamia published in the first days of November, 1918, had been eagerly read. Briefly that declaration announced the decision upon the part of the two contracting parties to offer

Milne Cheetham,[1] left in charge in Cairo, could not pierce the fog of uncertainty that was slowly closing round him.

The failure was not of his own making. Misled by inaccurate reports, he underestimated the influence of Zaghlul, and he thought too lightly of the flamboyant and truculent addresses that flowed continuously from his pen. Since sustaining his rebuke from the hands of the British government, the leader of the Wafd had not been idle. He had paid no more visits to Wingate, and was busy in organizing new lines of approach. Assured now of the undivided support of their fellow-countrymen, the Wafd boldly issued a manifesto demanding the complete independence of Egypt under the guarantee of Europe,[2] and encouraged by its reception, Zaghlul risked an audience with the Sultan. At it Zaghlul, in his quality as leader of the party, called upon His Highness, Ahmed Fuad, to require Great Britain to abandon her pretensions in Egypt. Behind that demand lay hid a more menacing design. Rushdi was persisting in his intention to resign, and Zaghlul determined that no Egyptian should replace him, planned the visit to the palace to frighten the Sultan into submission. The challenge was one which His Majesty's Government could not ignore. Great Britain had invited His Highness to occupy the throne of Egypt : it was her duty to protect him from these humiliations.

Ahmed Fuad [3] had succeeded his brother Hussein Kamil, the first Sultan of Egypt in the summer of 1917. He was an unassuming and retiring man, little known to the outside world. None the less those Englishmen and Egyptians who enjoyed His Highness' acquaintance, had marked his posses-

the initiative and choice of government to the inhabitants of the countries concerned. Egypt could not understand why she too should not exercise the same liberty.

[1] Sir Milne Cheetham, K.C.M.G., Counsellor of Embassy at the Residency for a period of ten years. His admirable work under four chiefs (Gorst, Kitchener, McMahon and Wingate) has never been adequately recognized. Twice he was called upon at critical moments to represent the interest of his country in Egypt ; in 1914 on the outbreak of war, and again in 1919 on the outbreak of revolutions, and on each occasion he fully merited the trust.

[2] 25th January, 1919.

[3] Born in Cairo, 26th March, 1868, youngest son of the Khedive Ismail.

sion of both talent and character, and more accurately ascribed his self-effacement to complete indifference to popularity. General Maxwell was among them. Many painful duties fell upon this officer during the course of the war : that of closing various Egyptian institutions being not the least of them. Of these organizations the Red Crescent Society was a notable example. Modelled upon the lines of the Red Cross, it had provided in various Balkan campaigns substantial service to Turkey, and Jemal's attack upon the Suez Canal in 1915 afforded fresh opportunity of succouring Turkish sick and wounded. But disputes and differences arose over the administration of the society, and Maxwell decided to terminate its existence. It was less easy to find a sequestrator. The task of winding up an organization created out of respect to the caliphate, was unlikely to appeal to any Moslem, and Maxwell sought in vain for a candidate, whose rank and reputation would command notice, until Prince Fuad courageously accepted the duty. The same disregard of public opinion now stood him in good stead. He had succeeded to an anxious and difficult inheritance, when Egypt was moodily contemplating her subjection to a protectorate and meditating upon her war grievances. More than one sovereign in the world at this hour sat uneasily upon his throne, and nowhere was a cool head more needed than in Cairo. His Highness' position was unenviable. He was condemned to sit and watch the growing discontent without power to avert or arrest it. Yet throughout these melancholy months he maintained the repose and dignity associated with his family. His restraint was remarkable : he trespassed neither upon the prerogative of martial law, nor upon the domain of his ministers. Once only did he break through his rigid rule of life. Egypt then lay trembling on the brink of anarchy, and no man knew what the morrow would bring forth. With his customary contempt for popular emotion, His Highness descended into the arena, and urged his subjects to resume their calmness. The counsel missed the mark, it is true : but just then neither rescript nor proclamation could influence the excited nation.

Great Britain did not avoid the issue which Zaghlul thus forced upon it, and General Watson, the senior military officer in Cairo, on the 7th March summoned the Egyptian,

and bade him discontinue his campaign. The warning was wasted. Zaghlul declined to give the required undertaking. He had not transgressed any law, he had not conspired against any authority, he had no desire to injure Great Britain. Such was his answer. It made no impression upon military authority, and forty-eight hours later he and three other Egyptians were conducted to Port Said, and there embarked upon a transport sailing to Malta. They departed, protesting their innocence of offence to the end. But the assurance did not carry conviction. Throughout Egypt his supporters had been calling upon their fellow countrymen to condemn the protectorate, and break off relations with England. Their words had been violent enough: but Zaghlul had not disclaimed the appeals, nor warned the speakers of their imprudence. Unhappily for the maintenance of order, both civil and military authority discovered the menace too late. The civilians were the greater offenders. Strange obsessions paralysed the minister of the interior, and the belief that Zaghlul enjoyed no great influence in the country was among them. Despite signs and warnings of danger, the Wafd was permitted to canvass the electorate as it pleased. The ministry of interior did not take the army into its counsel, or recall from leave inspectors and officials connected with public security services. There was a rude awakening.

No sooner did news of the arrest leak out than disturbance began. Then it was seen that Zaghlul on the high seas was a greater menace to public order than he had ever been in Egypt. Authority had taken decision too late. A month earlier the expulsion might have produced the effect desired: in March Egypt was too deeply moved to pause or reflect. Rioting began in the capital and the larger towns. The students paraded the streets, shouting for Zaghlul and for independence: disorderly mobs hung on to the flanks and rear of each procession, pilfering and stealing as they passed. Excitement grew until British troops had to be called in to restore order. Simultaneously the public services came to an abrupt stop. Trains and tramways ceased to run, letters to be delivered, streets to be lit and swept. By the middle of the month the infection had spread to the provinces. In every centre disorderly crowds gathered, terrorizing the

executive and demonstrating where and when they pleased : in the country the fellahin gave themselves up to the lust of destruction and murder. The permanent way was torn up, railway stations were burnt to the ground, irrigation locks and bridges broken down, dumps of military supplies fired and Europeans killed in cold blood.[1] It was the slaking of indiscriminate passion. Anarchy prevailed in some areas, self-elected committees replaced government in others. In Beni Suef, Minia, Assiut, and other towns of Upper Egypt groups of Englishmen and women were closely besieged : in the Delta the situation was hardly less serious.

At this moment General Sir E. Bulfin came post-haste from Syria, and took over command. His task was twofold : he had first to relieve his fellow-countrymen beleaguered in the provinces, next to crush disorder. Though demobilization had disintegrated the Egyptian expeditionary force on the Suez Canal and in Palestine, it was still a potential army, and in Syria lay regular units unaffected by the process. Moreover Bulfin could count upon a mounted division of Australian and New Zealand troops, awaiting transport to convey them home. No duty tries the temper and discipline of troops more highly than the repression of civil disturbances. Men cannot use their arms, lest attack becomes slaughter. If a soldier falls shot by an unseen adversary, his comrades must leave discovery of the culprit to the slow processes of law. It is a disagreeable duty at any time, and doubly so in 1919, when every fighting-man ardently desired to escape from the sounds of war. Of these unhappy events in Egypt, the conduct of the imperial troops engaged, was one of the few redeeming features.

No less commendable was the behaviour of the Egyptian police and army.[2] War, which thrust upon all servants of the government many arduous and unaccustomed duties,

[1] See a pamphlet entitled *Egypt 1919* by Tawaf (Whitehead & Morris, Alexandria, 1925), for the description of the tragedy of Deirut, where two British officers and five non-commissioned officers were dragged from the train and savagely done to death, and *The Egyptian Problem*, by Sir Valentine Chirol (MacMillan, London, 1920), for a lucid and instructive relation of these dismal days.

[2] Speaking in the House of Lords on the 24th March, 1919, Lord Curzon paid a high and well deserved compliment to both services.

had not spared the police. For five years, its officers and rank and file enjoyed no respite from anxiety, and if a few fell by the way, the majority issued triumphantly from the test. Conditions never favoured them. They were too few in number to carry out properly their perplexing duties, they were hampered with confusing and conflicting instructions. The ministry of interior sought in vain fresh ground to recruit reinforcements : there was soon nothing left in Egypt but the dregs of the population. Military authority had taken the pick of the reservists, private employers the remainder. In the towns of Alexandria and Port Said, seaports over which the intelligence services exercised stringent control, the police had their hardest and most painful struggle. Every allied Power interested in the Near East, following Great Britain's example, established naval and military bases in the harbour or on the seashore, and to the Egyptian police, the army confided the task of controlling the access to and from the water's edge. It was a duty which tested the temper of the force. The troops would not always admit the right of the police to question them ; military authority was often perplexed how to enforce obedience to the civil power. Yet when dispute arose, as frequently it did, between units of different nationality, or between the military and the native population, the Egyptian police behaved with circumspection, and gave their testimony with perfect impartiality. In the later endeavour to overthrow authority, they unhesitatingly performed their duty. There were instances, no doubt, when disaffection and indiscipline marked their conduct : but against these occasions must be set others, when officers and men clung in trying circumstances to the traditions of the police. Their path of duty was not smooth, and extremists attacked them incessantly with insidious appeals to their sense of patriotism. But as a body the police stood the strain upon their loyalty to the State remarkably well. Especially was the sense of discipline noticeable in Cairo and Alexandria, the two strongholds of the Wafd. Upon the training of the officers and men stationed in these towns, British commandants had lavished infinity of pains for more than a generation, and the result was not unsatisfactory at the hour of trial. When the personnel of other departments were

plotting to embarrass the executive, the police refused to follow the example.

The Egyptian army, though subjected to less severe ordeal than the police, equally maintained its discipline through these days of unrest. Discontent had touched the officers in common with other Egyptians. They had reason to complain of grievances special to themselves : of exclusion from higher staff appointments, of inadequate rates of pay and of stagnant promotion. Little wonder then if the whisper passed that disaffection pervaded their ranks. But the rumour was untrue, and no instance of misconduct stained the good name of Egyptian officers either during the war or in the repression of disorder after armistice. There was never any question of the loyalty of the rank and file serving with the expeditionary force. On the Suez Canal the Egyptian gunner, side by side with the Indian, had discharged his cannon at the invading Turk : in Arabia, in Sinai, in Palestine, and in Syria Egyptian infantry shared with British the uninspiring duty of garrisoning areas on the lines of communication. Thus if in the later history of this army there are instances of mutiny, let critics at least recall its admirable behaviour during the war. It was an encouraging if modest reminder that all ideals had not perished in the confusion which overtook Egypt in the spring of 1919.

General Bulfin at once convoked a meeting of officials and notables and announced his intentions. He did not stop to choose his language. Disorder would be put down first, retribution would follow later : such was his brief and uncompromising warning. From the capital radiated a number of mobile columns. Passion ran highest in upper Egypt, and the sieges and combats that marked the course of disorder there, had no counterpart in the Delta.[1] North of Cairo the peasantry are a more discreet and reflective race, and though they had suffered severely from military requi-

[1] It is proper to say that certain districts in the Delta escaped the storm : their inhabitants either awaited a signal which did not come, or they submitted to the will of individual Englishmen and Egyptians. Menufia was a notable instance. Major A. Wise, a cool and resolute inspector of the interior at one end, and the Reverend W. W. Cash of the Church Missionary Society at the other, kept a semblance of tranquillity through the length and breadth of a province notorious for lawlessness.

sition, they took care in paying off the score, not to imperil their own future prosperity. Agriculture is the soul of their life, and they thought twice before destroying irrigation works and railway plant. Without water their fields would be barren, without transport their crops would rot in the barn. Nor is that mysterious feeling of kinship, so noticeable in upper Egypt, as strongly developed in the Delta. The men of the latter neither combine so readily, nor do they plunge into adventures of which they cannot see the end. But the inhabitants of upper Egypt, lawless and truculent, here and there held their ground stubbornly against the punitive columns of troops despatched by Bulfin. Many valuable lives were sacrificed in these operations. In the Fayoum a combat almost approaching a pitched battle was fought, and snipers lying hid behind the river bank took toll of each steamer as she slowly moved up the Nile. Beleaguered in the larger towns there were still English men and women anxiously awaiting relief : and tiny units, that had succeeded in forcing an entrance, were not in sufficient strength to accomplish more than provide protection, often inadequate, to the besieged. Until reinforced, these advanced parties were unable to restore complete order. In Minia and in Assiut the situation was even critical. In the firstnamed town one wild visionary, a local notable, had assumed executive power, declaring war not only against Great Britain, but also against the Egyptian government. He established a " Committee of Public Safety," and appointed himself its President. His authority lasted only a few days : but to the credit of the members of the Committee, it may be said that they succeeded at least in maintaining a semblance of order in the town.[1] In Assiut the European community endured even graver anxiety for the space of several days, and only the courage of a handful of infirm British soldiers, guarding a supply depôt, prevented disaster.

By the end of March the thirst for arson and blood had

[1] A Military Court was convened later to try the members of this " Committee of Public Safety." The indictment included a number of charges, the most serious being one of " war treason." The accused were convicted and all sentenced to death : but on review, superior authority commuted the penalty to various terms of penal servitude and imprisonment.

died away, and Egypt was gloomily meditating over the bill she would be called upon to pay.[1] Disorder had lasted barely a month, and the camps of squadrons and companies of British and Indian troops dotted about the countryside were now the only relic of it. The people of Egypt braced themselves to meet the sequel, that Bulfin had said would follow. To pursue the offenders under the normal procedure of Egyptian law was impracticable, since the Egyptian justiciary lay itself under suspicion of sympathizing with the outbreak. It became therefore necessary to set up special tribunals.[2] Such courts were no novelty to Egypt. A proclamation dated 14th May, 1916, had empowered the army to punish civilians committing offences to the prejudice of military interests, and Bulfin was advised that acts of disorder fell within that definition. But in the coming trials conviction would depend upon proof of conspiracy, a charge that requires a knowledge of law to interpret satisfactorily, and Bulfin, taking no risk, borrowed as advisers to his military courts a number of British judges in the service of the Egyptian government. At his own elbow sat the senior of these Englishmen.[3]

The tumult that overtook Egypt in the spring of 1919 is frequently spoken of as revolution or insurrection: but

[1] Following the precedent of 1882, the Egyptian government accepted responsibility for damage suffered by the innocent victims of disorder. On the 13th October, 1919, the ministry of finance placed to the credit of a commission appointed to investigate individual claims, the handsome sum of £1,000,000. Two days later, a military proclamation inhibited the Mixed and Native tribunals from interfering with or examining the decisions of this commission.

[2] These tribunals tried during a period of three months as many as 2,304 cases. Of the trials, 1,613 resulted in conviction and 99 were quashed by higher legal authority. Sentence of death was passed upon 102 accused and the High Commissioner commuted the penalty to terms of penal servitude or imprisonment in fifty-five instances. In July, the ordinary Egyptian Tribunals replaced the Military Court.

[3] Sir John Percival, vice-president of the Egyptian court of appeal. He was an admirable choice: for he enjoyed, and justly enjoyed, the respect of the general public. In his capacity as legal adviser at military head-quarters, he never allowed law to override common sense, or a strange environment to weaken sense of judicial responsibility.

neither term seems a correct description. Disorder is a more accurate definition. No evidence has ever been forthcoming to connect any Egyptian of standing and reputation with having planned or even advocated revolution. The Wafd, it is true, made no effort to control the bands of students who roamed about the countryside sowing in their passage the seed of passion and of hatred, or their seniors who preached violent doctrines in the cafés and clubs of Cairo : and from this neutrality, Zaghlul and his more active lieutenants cannot escape responsibility. But beyond that cautious verdict, the observer will probably be indisposed to go. If insurrection was seriously planned, its promoters cannot be congratulated upon their talent. Of organization there was little trace : imagination and combination were lacking alike. The hour chosen to begin was singularly unsuitable, since the Egyptian expeditionary force was still a powerful army. A month later the process of demobilization would have robbed military authority of many units that in March were still intact. Again disturbance was sporadic : like some mysterious epidemic, it jumped from one locality to another without apparent reason. It may be urged no doubt that the unexpected deportation of Zaghlul ruined a preconceived plan,[1] and left subordinate conspirators uncertain how to proceed. But that contention implies that Zaghlul at the time of his arrest, was a rebel, and indications do not point that way. Egypt bursting

[1] More than one recent commentator has unhesitatingly adopted this presumption : notably the writer of the report of the Milner Mission, who states that " there is reason to believe that the attacks upon them (the State railways) were carried out in pursuance of a pre-existing plan for a Germano-Turkish attack on the canal, supported by a simultaneous rising in Egypt. This would account for certain indications of concerted action revealed in the disturbances of March, 1919." But neither Lord Milner nor others advance any documentary evidence or proof of their belief : and it is certainly a little curious that Djemal Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Germano-Turkish forces on the Palestine-Egypt front, in his *Memoirs of a Turkish Statesman*, Oberst Freiherr Kress Von Kressenstein, Djemal's military adviser, in the *Jahrbuch des Bundes der Asienkamfer*, and Colonel Ali Bey Fuad, the Senior Staff Officer of the 10th Division of the Turkish Expeditionary Force, in his *The Egyptian Expedition : or from Paris to the Desert*, make no mention of any such scheme.

with indignation found an outlet in physical violence, and of this mournful chapter of her history, there seems little more than that to say.

Meanwhile General Sir Edmund Allenby, commander-in-chief of the Egyptian expeditionary force, had been appointed special High Commissioner.[1] His position was perplexing. The ministry had resigned, the civil service was wavering, and the country labouring under impotent rage. Allenby rightly deciding that his first business must be the re-establishment of constitutional government persuaded Rushdi to reform his ministry on the understanding that Zaghlul and his three companions were set free.[2] But hardly had the new High Commissioner got government going again, than the Egyptian civil service, fearing lest the Wafd should misconstrue a compliment paid to their loyalty in the House of Lords, incontinently left their offices and desks, and Rushdi again threw up the sponge. It was an unfortunate ending to his career. He had been in many ways an ideal prime minister, an unselfish and unseeking servant of his country, a man of honour and of courage. His word was always as good as his bond, and no Egyptian or Englishman could declare that Rushdi had deliberately misled him. Time and again he stood between the pair, time and again he protected individuals who lay under suspicion. His resignation at this juncture was a blow to Allenby : but none the less the High Commissioner held to the path of reconciliation. A double duty had been laid upon him. He was in Egypt not only to restore law and order, but to administrate Egypt in accordance with the necessity of maintaining the King's protectorate on a sure

[1] 25th March, 1919. The terms of his appointment were published in the *Official Journal*, Egyptian government in its issue of 25th March, 1919. Allenby had been summoned to Paris to inform the British government on the subject of Syria.

[2] Presumably the British government concurred : but Lord Curzon's words in the House of Lords imply doubt on the point. Speaking on the 15th May, 1919, he said : " Immediately after his arrival and in the exercise of the full discretionary powers granted to him as special High Commissioner, General Allenby decided that the Nationalists should be allowed to leave Egypt for Europe, and that the four leaders, including Zaghlul, who had been interned at Malta, should be given the same freedom."

and equal basis. Bulfin had accomplished the first: the second was Allenby's business. Many of his supporters and admirers thought the procedure he pursued impolitic. Those who had most loudly denounced the refusal of the British government to receive an Egyptian deputation in London, now condemned Allenby's insistence that Zaghlul and his companions must be set at liberty. Nor were these critics better pleased with the High Commissioner's good-natured clemency in other instances. They would have had him administer a sharp and salutary lesson to Egypt, before he embarked upon a policy of conciliation. But Allenby clearly did not share that draconic ideal: more merciful, he thought that repression may terrify, but cannot persuade a whole nation suffering under a sense of grievance, into permanent tranquillity. Thus of the offenders convicted by military court, he pardoned some, and commuted the sentences of others. Retaliation was no part of his policy: he wished hatred of England to flicker out, disorder and its consequences to be forgotten. It was a generous ideal, not inconsonant with Allenby's character. But wider knowledge of the history of the occupation would have taught him the hopelessness of expecting Egypt to respond to any generous gesture. She was sorely hurt. She had never acknowledged herself indebted to England: she was little likely to do so now. She had broken off the contest: but her hostility was still unquenched, and her anger was still alive. None the less Allenby was right in forbearing to exercise his strength. The situation was already sufficiently tangled without the need of fresh stimulus: retaliation would only accentuate bitterness, and make future relations yet more difficult. His Majesty's government, less clear-sighted, would make no concession. Egypt was never allowed to forget her subjection to the protectorate.[1]

Zaghlul and his companions, released from internment in Malta, were now comfortably established in Paris. They

[1] See Lord Curzon's speech in the House of Lords the 15th May, 1919: "I cannot declare too emphatically that His Majesty's government have no intention whatsoever of ignoring or abandoning the obligation and responsibilities which they incurred, when the task of governing was placed on their shoulders. These obligations have been confirmed by the declaration of our protectorate over the country."

left cards upon the members of the peace congress, but only the Italian returned the call. It was the first hint that Europe had other business to do than listen to the woes of Egypt. In his simple heart Zaghlul had thought that he had but to relate his tale, and the Powers would invite England to answer the indictment. But the congress had no intention of doing any such thing. Great Britain had been beforehand, and had advised the various governments of Europe that her relations with Egypt were her sole concern. And Zaghlul was further handicapped by his lack of formal credentials. He spoke familiarly of a mandate: but he could name no constitutional authority, that had entrusted him with one. His last hope lay in President Wilson: but appeal to that quarter was equally unsuccessful. On the 19th April, 1919, the United States of America acknowledged Great Britain's protectorate over Egypt. The Wafd was thus driven to choose between remaining idle in Paris, or returning to Egypt. Great Britain would not furnish them with passports to London, the United States would not permit them to land in America. Thus caught, they fell back upon a publicity campaign. They wrote and circulated a host of notes and explanations, which the Powers neither studied nor answered. It was difficult indeed for the critical mind to take these publications seriously. A certain crudity of expression and thought robbed them of value. Stories of British misrule and British retaliation, readily accepted in Egypt, required substantiation which the authors could not supply, and so little impression did the Wafd make on the congress that more than one member slipped home in disgust, and discussion among those who stayed grew heated and acrimonious.

Egypt was no happier during this summer. Industrial dispute rent her from end to end: the cost of living had risen by leaps and bounds, and the poorer classes were harder pushed than ever.[1] The government sat with folded

[1] In the Report of the Milner Mission occurs the following comment upon this point: "a family of four, a man, his wife and two children, could not at the beginning of 1919 obtain a sufficiency of food except at a cost which considerably exceeded the ordinary rate of wages." The Egyptian government ignored the facts, an attitude that might have cost them dearly had not the acting financial adviser, Sir Reginald Patterson, sensing danger, persuaded ministers to grant

hands, and watched the politician make capital out of the misery that prevailed. Hitherto Egypt had been happily free from labour trouble, and masters and men had composed their differences without loss of temper. But war impaired the old kindly relations, and in his anxiety to get rich quickly, the employer took no thought of the straits of labour. It became a simple matter to persuade the men, soured by struggle against privation, that Great Britain was the source of their trouble, that the Wafd alone could deliver them out of her hands. Organizations under the guise of labour syndicates sprang up everywhere. These societies had nothing in common with the labour unions of Europe. The leaders broke the rules they themselves had framed, they published no accounts of expenditure of funds. Belatedly the government awoke to the existence of the evil, and set up a conciliation commission. They had better have begun by regulating the procedure of syndicates, and requiring in the interest of labour an audit of their funds.[1]

The indifference of Mohammed Pasha Said, the successor of Rushdi, to the manœuvres of the Wafd was unexpected: for public opinion had credited him with the intention of making short work of Zaghlul and his party. Certainly there was little love lost between these two men: a jealous rivalry had kept them apart for many years. But Mohammed Said at this stage could count upon support from no quarter. He aimed at supplanting Zaghlul, but in his

increases of salary throughout the civil service. The concession cost the State £2,100,000: but it reduced discontent and forced other employers to follow suit.

[1] Thus in his sixth report, referring to the Cairo tramways, Doctor Granville, chairman of the commission, wrote: "We are impressed by the belief that political motives are at the bottom of the trouble. Funds are expended upon strikers and agitators to which labour has not contributed. In short, the arbitrary stoppages of work, continually made before any complaint has been ever registered, convince us that the tramway services so important to Cairo, are being utilized for political ends." But to such a pitch had matters come, that some of the leaders were able to persuade labourers to assign their pay to them. Not until 28th January, 1921, did the government prohibit this insidious practice, and invite the High Commissioner to make infraction of their decree an offence punishable by martial law.

first encounter with the High Commissioner,[1] he was worsted and his prestige in Egyptian eyes had declined from that hour. He accepted defeat, and reflected how he could preserve the remnants of his reputation. It was not difficult to find a way. The British government had recently announced their intention to despatch a mission of inquiry to Egypt, and with it as his excuse, Mohammed Said resigned. His objection to the mission was as ingenious as it was plausible. Reminding Egypt that no treaty or convention had yet freed her from Turkish sovereignty, he bade her await that release before entering into discussion or negotiation with England. The plea was exactly what Egypt wanted most at that moment, a reasonable excuse for refusing to treat with the visitors. That the British government dismissed the pretext as unrelated to the facts, did not disturb the prime minister's complacency, or arrest the shower of compliments which descended upon his head. It was praise that he little deserved: for his advice only delayed settlement. Mohammed Said was no Solomon come to judgment.

Delay in the departure of the mission robbed it of the best chance of success. In May its chairman, Lord Milner, might have persuaded representative Egyptians to meet him: in December that prospect was gone.[2] During the interval the Wafd in Egypt had not been idle. It reorganized its procedure, and collected enough money to defray the expenses of Zaghlul in Paris: it held up the ministers to scorn, and it urged their fellow-countrymen incessantly to ignore the coming inquiry. In that appeal it was completely successful: for when Milner opened his investigation, no Egyptian would parley with him or acknowledge his presence. So thorough was the boycott that the mission, after four months' patient waiting, withdrew. Yet Milner and his fellow commissioners might have been successful had they come in the spring, when moderate men, ashamed

[1] He had rashly promised to secure the commutation of all death sentences passed upon Egyptians found guilty of disorder. Of fifty-one persons condemned to death, military authority had already pardoned one, and commuted the sentences of ten others, and Mohammed Said's intervention only succeeded in obtaining the reprieve of six more. See communiqué Council of Ministers, 10th July, 1919.

[2] The mission arrived in Cairo on 7th December, 1920.

of disorder and not wholly approving of Zaghlul, would have been glad enough to meet them. There is nothing improbable in that assertion. To a sympathetic audience the Egyptian will readily disburden himself, and Milner would have put the confession to good use. No doubt there were good reasons for delaying departure from May to December. The Egyptian summer, for one thing, offers little inducement to serious work. A drowsiness inimical to decision and unfriendly to discussion, weighs down the whole community: commerce suspends its operations, and government their projects. Following the practice of the palace, ministers transfer their quarters to Alexandria, diplomatic agents and officials follow in their train. Nor was climate the only objection to an immediate start. Milner was a secretary of state, and a cabinet minister cannot undertake a protracted inquiry abroad at a moment's notice: he is only one of the government, but he also bears individual responsibilities upon his shoulders. Egypt was not the only dominion or dependency, which required some adjustment of her relations with the mother country, and in Lord Milner's opinion Egypt must abide her turn. He at least could not wait upon her. Yet though substantial enough, it is doubtful whether the reasoning was sound. There had been grave trouble in Egypt: there was threat of more to come. It was the business of the British government to elucidate the facts at the earliest possible moment. To have dropped Milner would have been a serious misfortune, but less irreparable perhaps than delaying the departure of the mission. Thus summer had slipped into winter before Milner sailed, and his explanation of the delay is unconvincing.[1]

Into this atmosphere of temper and suspicion, the mission was projected. Its welcome was unpromising. Municipalities, provincial councils, and other public bodies, besieged it with angry protest: [2] individual Egyptians held coldly aloof: and overcoming its fear of martial law, the press

[1] See the introductory paragraph of the report: "The change of ministry in Egypt, and other circumstances caused the departure of the mission to be delayed until the end of November."

[2] Most of the communications (there were 1,131 received) protested in general terms against the presence of the mission, and recommended its members to address themselves to Zaghlul: Only a few indicated more distinctly their individual opinions. Among this

openly declared the inquiry to be an insolent reminder of Egypt's subjection. The publication of its terms of reference [1] had prepared the way. It cannot be said that much knowledge or intuition guided the pen of their author. It was obvious enough then that Egyptians would agree to no form of constitution based upon the protectorate. The High Commissioner, hampered by much the same instructions, had not yet succeeded in persuading Egypt of Great Britain's good faith, and it was improbable that Milner would fare better. But no such reflection apparently occurred to His Majesty's cabinet. In ignorance of Egyptian prejudice and in pursuit of an ideal no longer practicable, the government saddled the mission with instructions which robbed it of success. No British minister could bring himself to believe that Egypt would decline the protection of Great Britain, and that unfortunate and mistaken impression prevailed for many months to come. It is indeed a little difficult to understand why His Majesty's government clung so persistently to a formula which exasperated a whole nation. No doubt the protectorate had relieved Great Britain of ambiguities inseparable from a military occupation, and had provided a more regular title for maintaining troops in Egypt. But there was nothing sacrosanct about the term protectorate. Tradition had not hallowed, or custom consecrated its choice. It was a political formula necessary no doubt in war, of less significance in peace. Nor to the plain mind was the difficulty of discovering a substitute, which would have indicated Great Britain's special interest, without wounding Egyptian sentiment, altogether insuperable. For into the expression, the Egyptian read a sinister and humiliating meaning, an intention on the part of England to indicate to the world his inferiority. He resented the reproach, and declaimed against a political condition

small minority was the Hisbet El Watani, or National party, who earlier in the year had disputed with the Wafd the right to represent Egypt.

[1] "To inquire into the causes of the late disorders in Egypt, and to report upon the existing situation in the country, and the form of the constitution which, under the Protectorate, will be best calculated to promote its peace and prosperity, the progressive development of self-governing institutions and the protection of foreign interests."

usually reserved for a semi-barbarous people. Unhappily His Majesty's government did not recognize the strength of this prejudice until too late. The delay was fatal to reconciliation. It kept alive a hatred, which time would have softened, and it drove all Egyptians into a single camp.

The terms disappointed also many Englishmen resident in Egypt. Imperialists by conviction, they expected from His Majesty's government more sympathy with, and wider knowledge of Egyptian thought and feeling. Themselves acquainted with the facts of the situation, they profoundly regretted the inclusion in the reference of the fatal phrase "under the Protectorate." Their disappointment was the more profound, in that they did not perceive what useful purpose Milner and his colleagues would serve in Egypt. It seemed scarcely necessary to despatch to Cairo half a dozen representative Englishmen in order to "inquire into the causes of the late disorders," or to report "upon the existing situation." There was no uncertainty upon the origin of the first, or of the facts of the second: innumerable despatches and reports must long ago have informed His Majesty's government upon both points. The mission, no doubt, could present a faithful record of the causes, which had led to disorder, and could indicate their result: but in the research it would awaken painful memories, and increase Great Britain's perplexities. But whatever criticism there was of the instructions, it did not extend to the composition of the mission.[1] His Majesty's government could hardly have bettered their choice of its members. Some had had experience of Egypt, and were still upon terms of friendship with her people: all had made in one form or another their mark in public life. Particularly happy was the selection of Lord Milner as chairman. A profound knowledge of human nature, and inexhaustible patience with its frailties admirably fitted him to conduct discussion with an emotional race. Since he wrote *England in Egypt*, age had mellowed his political ideals and ripened his judgment. He was now a statesman, who looked to reap advantage from the future,

[1] Viscount Milner, G.C.B., Chairman; Sir Rennell Rodd, G.C.B., General Sir John Maxwell, G.C.B., Brigadier-General Sir Owen Thomas, M.P., Sir Cecil Hurst, K.C.B., K.C., Foreign Office, and Mr. J. A. Spender, members. Egyptians, it may be said, particularly appreciated Spender's resource and sympathy.

not from the present. During his long career, he had tasted success and known failure : but the first had not spoiled him nor the second embittered him. If any Englishman could reconcile Egyptian desires with imperial interests, it would be Milner. Upon that point his fellow countrymen were agreed.

Once more Cairo witnessed the familiar spectacle of processions parading the streets, crying that Milner must conduct negotiation through Zaghlul, or not at all. In vain the government declared such meetings illegal ; in vain military authority supported that injunction. Egypt would listen neither to threat nor to reason. Measures even had to be taken to secure the safety of the visitors during their stay in the capital. Armed guards stood at the doorway of the hotel occupied by them, and policemen in plain clothes shadowed their movements. It was unsafe for any member of the mission to venture out of Cairo. In face of this hostility, Milner was powerless. Nor was he assisted by a communiqué published over the signature of the High Commissioner.[1] The cabinet had dictated it in the expectation of smoothing the path : but that laudable hope was disappointed. It was well enough to introduce the mission formally to the Egyptian public, but unhappily His Majesty's government seized the occasion to restate a determination to maintain the protectorate. From that tactical error the mission never really recovered. Through the communiqué ran the misconception, which had inspired the conduct of Egyptian affairs since November, 1918 : that the opposition was factitious and impermanent. Nothing that Egypt did, or said, removed that mistaken impression.

Wherever in Cairo Milner turned, he met with unfriendly and sullen looks. Spies watched and reported his visitors, pickets of students accosted and turned them back. Nor was it any easier to elicit the opinion of the fellahin. One or two of his colleagues who made the experiment, encountered a reception so threatening and discourteous, that they abandoned the experiment in despair. Milner himself patiently awaited the development of a more reasonable spirit. The expectation was disappointed, and at the end of three idle weeks, he broke fresh ground. He protested

[1] 4th December, 1919.

the innocence of his motives : he gave a solemn assurance that he did not seek to deprive Egypt of the rights and privileges which she enjoyed : and he invited all men to express their views with perfect freedom. His friendly words found no echo. Egypt would not speak except through the mouth of Zaghlul. The boycott of the mission was complete.

Formidable adversaries, who had abstained from entering the lists, now publicly ranged themselves against the mission. In the van were the ulemas of El Azhar. Strictly speaking the business of this university is theology and not politics, and Lord Milner was perhaps justified in discounting their protest, but he was on less sure ground when he questioned the sincerity of half a dozen princes of the Sultanic family. Their declaration had little pretension to notice. It was an artless document : its simplicity disarmed serious criticism. A panegyric upon the virtues of Mohammed Ali, founder of the dynasty, occupied the first half of the document : the assurance of his descendants' affection for Egypt the second half. There was no analysis of the situation, no comprehension of the difficulties which encompassed it. As a statement of the signatories' personal views, the manifesto passed muster : as a contribution of importance, little can be said in its favour. The publication was received coldly. The press gave it their blessing, and unreflective politicians welcomed it as final evidence of the nation's solidarity. More thoughtful Egyptians withheld their judgment, uncertain of the sincerity of its authors, and Lord Milner like them was unimpressed. With strict economy of words, he merely recorded his belief that vanity had inspired the declaration, and dismissed it as unworthy of more critical notice.[1] The verdict was both superficial and unjust. It may well be that the authors of the document desired to win popularity : but that motive had not alone dictated their intervention. Nor was it either unreasonable or improper, for the descendants of Mohammed Ali to seize the occasion, if they thought it suitable, to remind Egypt how skilfully that illustrious sovereign had governed. They had certainly no particular reason to be grateful to Great Britain : for her representatives in Egypt consistently ignored their existence. There

[1] Page 4, *Report of the Special Mission to Egypt.* (*Egypt No. 1, 1921.*)

were difficulties no doubt in associating the younger members of the dynasty with the task of government : yet it is perhaps unfortunate that the occupation has made little use of them, since many are men of a high order of capacity, who conduct their private business with judgment. The family repaid the slight by watching Great Britain's rule with amused contempt. They had no love for it, and they thought it the personification of hypocrisy. Great Britain forbade Abbas Hilmi to rule, yet she held him to account for her own errors of government : she declaimed against despotism, yet through the person of her representative in Cairo, she studiously practised it. These princes, indeed, were among the last people in Egypt, from whom Milner could expect support. It was less easy to dispose of the resolutions of the legislative assembly. They were illegal in that they proceeded from a body forbidden to deliberate, but none the less their sponsors did actually represent the people of Egypt. Matters came to a head on the 9th March, 1920, when the assembly met, and declared the protectorate null and void, and Egypt and the Sudan indivisible. It was too much for the High Commissioner's good nature. He had closed his eyes to previous infractions of the law : he stepped down now, and sternly forbade under martial law any future meeting of Egypt's representatives. An equally uncompromising and implacable reply to Milner's gentle invitation came from the Hisbet El Watani, or Nationalist Party.[1] There was no ambiguity about the words, or doubt of its leaders' intentions. Once and for all this party declined negotiation or discussion, until Great Britain admitting the independence of Egypt and the Sudan, withdrew from the valley of the Nile her troops and administrative officers. Earnestly the party adjured the people to resist and boycott the mission, to accept anarchy rather than admit the pretensions of the Power that had sent it. There was little use in arguing with these irreconcilable men

[1] It published on the 5th January, 1920, a manifesto headed by the words " No protectorate, no alliance, no agreement." The Nationalist party took its cue from a declaration passed by congress sitting in Philadelphia in 1776. In solemn words that congress had proclaimed that America would not negotiate, so long as a single British soldier remained on her soil.

Their manifesto was less a declaration of belief than an ultimatum, and Milner ignored the challenge.

In official circles, where the mission had confidently anticipated receiving counsel and assistance, it was equally unsuccessful. The Sultan himself offered no advice. He spoke of his own difficulties, but he indicated no practical outlet for them. His Highness had not invited the mission to come and he was under no obligation to assist its labours. The prime minister [1] was equally cautious. He advanced no opinion, he invited none in return. His colleagues were equally incurious, and a polite but determined reserve marked their intercourse with the visitors throughout their stay in Egypt. They found no more comfort at the residency. The High Commissioner had stayed to receive them, and then departed upon a protracted tour of inspection in the Sudan. Thus Milner was left to gather information from the civil service, and individual members of the foreign community. It should have been ample: but he was too acute and too experienced to accept war as an adequate explanation of the discontent. Its roots he felt must lie deeper than it. He reflected for awhile, and thought to find them in the independence of the British official. But that was only half the story: the absence of a definite policy, and the licence accorded by the British government to successive agents and consuls-general, accounted for the rest. Through that accident Great Britain had never been able to regulate her relations with Egypt: from it Cromer, Gorst, and Kitchener had pursued different ideals.

Despite his wit and patience, Lord Milner could not reconcile Egypt to the presence of the mission, and early in March he relinquished the endeavour. In that he was by then informed of "the causes of the late disorders," and could also report "upon the existing situation in the country," he had accomplished his task. But these successes brought him no nearer the accomplishment of the third and more complex part of his instructions: he was still unable to suggest a form of constitution, that under the protectorate would promote the peace and prosperity of Egypt, the progressive development of self-governing institutions, and the pro-

[1] Wahba Pasha succeeded Mohammed Said on the 4th November, 1919.

tection of foreign interests. It was a disappointing conclusion to a mission which had left England with such fair hopes. Yet if the solution eluded Milner he had at least acquired some knowledge of the aspirations of the Egyptian people, and he was equipped to make a fresh start. From observation and reflection, the mission had come to two definite conclusions : first, that Egypt would negotiate only through Zaghlul, and secondly that His Majesty's government must substitute for the protectorate a formula less obnoxious to Egyptian ears. Alliance seemed the obvious alternative, and Milner considered how best he could persuade the people of Egypt of its advantages.

CHAPTER XIII

NEGOTIATION

Among the few Egyptians careless of public opinion, was Adli Pasha Yeghen, a man experienced in affairs, and indifferent to hostile criticism. He had spoken sufficiently often with members of the mission to be informed of their views, and he was now bent upon contriving a meeting between Milner and Zaghlul. So far neither one nor the other had reached his goal. Zaghlul was in Paris, and Milner had been in Cairo : but the allied Powers would not listen to the first,[1] nor the Egyptians to the second. The moment, therefore, seemed opportune to bring the two negotiators together, and Adli endeavoured to persuade Zaghlul to that course. It cost him more pains than he anticipated. Zaghlul was suspicious and difficult to convince. But in the end wearied by the other's pertinacity, he gave way, and consented to three members of his party sounding Milner. Their report was satisfactory, and early in June Zaghlul transferred his headquarters to London. Lord Milner was not accustomed to stand on ceremony when disregard of it would shorten the road to his goal, and he did not do so on this occasion. He accepted Zaghlul's claim to speak for Egypt, he put out of mind Lord Curzon's declaration a year ago.[2] To him it was

[1] They had already recognized the protectorate, and the treaties of Versailles, St. Germain and Sèvres, obliged Germany, Austria and Turkey to do so also.

[2] Speaking in the House of Lords, Earl Curzon, the Lord President of the Council, said on the 24th March, 1919 : " As regards Zaghlul and the persons who have organized the present movement, it is a different matter. They are the self-appointed and irresponsible leaders of an agitation for the avowed purpose of expelling the British Government from Egypt . . . with them there is no common ground for discussion. Their presence here would have been generally misunderstood in Egypt."

a sad commentary upon British statesmanship that Egypt, modest in size and in population, should keep England so long at bay.

Thus for the first time in these confused months, commonsense prevailed, and the two men met. There was no reason for distrust on the part of Zaghlul. Lord Milner neither wished to deceive him, nor to rob Egypt of her natural rights. He had said as much in Cairo, he repeated the assurance in London. But neither did he intend to yield any of Great Britain's special interests. Like other Englishmen he was proud of his country's stewardship of Egypt. It had nursed a sickly ward to healthy adolescence, and Egypt, as her present prosperity bore witness, had profited from the period of tutelage. But Milner did not disguise from himself the difficulty of persuading Zaghlul that British interests did not conflict with Egyptian, or of satisfying his own government that the mission had kept within the terms of its reference. Upon opinion in Egypt he did not speculate : he was more concerned with the effect upon the British mind of the concessions, which he proposed to offer Egypt in return for her friendship. Though they were handsome enough, he hoped that public opinion at home would approve a settlement that safeguarded British communications and ascendency in Egypt. It was in his mind to secure those two essentials to settlement by persuading Egypt to acknowledge the special position of Great Britain's representative, to consent to the maintenance of a British military force on Egyptian territory, and to submit the capitulatory rights of foreigners to the keeping of His Majesty's government. They were solid inroads no doubt upon the sovereignty of a nation, but Milner was prepared to be generous in turn.

A treaty of alliance, wherein Great Britain recognized the independence of Egypt as a constitutional monarchy with representative institutions, while Egypt admitted Great Britain's imperial interests, appeared a reasonable mean between the claims of both countries : and to make the bargain more attractive, Milner further proposed that Great Britain should defend Egypt against foreign aggression, if the latter placed her national resources at the disposal of His Majesty's government in time of war. But Zaghlul was less convinced of the fairness of the proposal than Milner,

and the longer he reflected the more reluctant he became to approve any agreement on these lines. It was very far from the unfettered independence, that he had boasted he would have, and he conjured up an imaginary picture of rivals at home, denouncing his weakness and plotting his overthrow. It was impossible to reassure him on the point, and had he been alone, he would have broken off conversation, and returned to Paris. But he was not wholly free. In his company were men less timid of their reputation, and less disposed to reject a settlement that conceded so much. As the hour of decision approached, Zaghlul played for time. He went back to points already discussed and determined, and his hesitation drove Milner almost to despair. In vain the latter essayed to convince Zaghlul that the mandate of which he spoke so frequently and so familiarly, was his own creation, and that Great Britain would maintain the spirit no less than the letter of any treaty or alliance. His words were wasted.

It must be said in excuse for Zaghlul that his course was not so easy as Milner seemed to imagine. The British public would not charge their representative with treachery, if his concessions did not meet with their approval, whereas Zaghlul knew very well the fate that would befall him in similar circumstances. Nowhere in the world is a man more swiftly reminded of failure than in Egypt, nowhere is political reputation more transitory. One false step is sufficient to bring about the downfall of a leader. Newspapers ignore him, the public forget his identity. Perhaps the consequences of failure are the same everywhere : but descent from power and place is a more painful experience to the Egyptian than to men of other races. Nothing that Milner could say or do, would induce Zaghlul to put his name to any document. Milner was grievously disappointed. He had anticipated presenting Great Britain and Egypt simultaneously with a signed agreement, but that hope he had now to relinquish, and consent to a less satisfactory alternative. Egypt was first to pronounce upon the proposal, and then Great Britain. It was difficult enough to persuade Zaghlul to accept this concession. Some one must explain the issue to the people of Egypt, and Zaghlul would neither go himself, nor commission another. He was afraid lest the terms of

settlement should be disappointing, and he was suspicious of the loyalty of many of his companions in London. His uncertainty seemed likely to bring negotiation to a standstill, when Adli came to the relief, and insisted that Zaghlul should choose one or two members of the party to return to Egypt in order to ascertain the opinion of the people. It was a pity that Adli could not go himself. He would have made an ideal envoy. His reputation was beyond reproach, his patriotism no less so. But he was a free-lance, neither a member of the Wafd, nor officially a party to the discussion, and his share in negotiation was limited to mediation and advice.[1] It was not therefore for him to report progress, and Zaghlul's choice fell upon Mohammed Pasha Mahmud. He had dabbled in politics all his short life. His father, an Egyptian of moderate views and cautious judgment, had sent the boy to Oxford.[2] Four years of university life taught him something of British ideals, and so much impressed by their virtue did he appear to be, that Englishmen in Egypt credited him with their own ways of thought. It was too hasty a conclusion. Oxford had not transformed Mohammed Mahmud into an Englishman, nor did he aspire to be one. He became an inspector of the ministry of interior in 1903, and the appointment, the first of its type, was not popular. Already ministers and mudirs were viewing with jealous eyes the intrusion of young Englishmen from the Universities into the provinces : their reinforcement by an Egyptian no better equipped, did not mitigate the bitterness. But Egypt had mistaken Cromer's motive. He did not propose to create a mixed, much less an Egyptian inspectorate : he had hoped by pairing Egyptians with Englishmen to inspire each with surer knowledge of the ideals of the other. It was a meritorious ambition.

Promotion came quickly to Mohammed Mahmud. He became a mudir, and a successful, if not brilliant, administrator. But he made enemies as well as friends. Quick-witted, he had no patience with stupidity ; energetic, he had no sympathy with laziness. He was ahead of his time. During the war his methods of administration were im-

[1] Lord Milner, in Sub-chapters A and C, Chapter III, *Report of the Special Mission*, acknowledges Adli's services in graceful language.

[2] He obtained a second class in the History Schools.

pugned, and under the censure which followed, he resigned.[1] So seemed to terminate a career, from which Cromer had expected much. At once Mohammed Mahmud betook himself to politics. He joined Zaghlul, and shared with him the indignity of exile. But he was never a conspirator, nor an advocate of violence. He went from Paris to America, to persuade the people of that continent of the justice of Egypt's complaint: but the journey was fruitless. The United States were heartily tired of the quarrels and disputes of the old world, and refused to honour their President's brave words on the right of smaller nations to self-determination.

It is unnecessary to reproduce here the Milner-Zaghlul agreement, and of the memorandum [2] it is sufficient to say that the text admitted the paramount interests of Great Britain in Egypt, and acknowledged the independence of the latter. In placing the resources of their country at the disposal of Great Britain in time of war, Zaghlul offered a contribution to settlement the more substantial, in that no inconvenient conditions qualified it. Whether Egypt was involved or not in the dispute, her harbours, her aerodromes and her communications would be at the King's service. It was a handsome and generous offer. But Great Britain's claim to maintain on Egyptian territory a permanent military force, was another matter, and Egyptian anxiety upon the point was intelligible enough. Such a garrison might easily become a second army of occupation, and Milner could find no way of satisfying that fear. Nor was he better able to define the boundaries of the military enclave, though to Zaghlul nothing seemed more simple. In his judgment the peninsula of Sinai would make an admirable base for imperial defence purposes. No Egyptian desired to inhabit this inhospitable territory, no Egyptian would dispute Great Britain's occupation of these arid wastes. It was a pardon-

[1] He was at that moment mudir of Beheira, a province of the northern Delta, flanked by the desert and peopled by a truculent and lawless population. To this province, notorious for serious crime, went Mohammed Mahmud, bent upon removing the reproach. He swept too clean. His subordinates practised methods possible in the days of Mohammed Ali, but indefensible in the twentieth century.

[2] Dated 18th August, 1920. Sub-chapter B, Chapter III, *Report of the Special Mission to Egypt*, gives the text.

able mistake in light of the life and treasure that England had so recently squandered upon the defence of the Suez Canal, if Egypt genuinely believed that the interest of His Majesty's government related wholly to that waterway. But Milner could not ignore the obvious military objections to stationing troops in the canal zone. The supply of potable water was one. The Ismailia Canal, an important unit of the Delta irrigation system, takes off at Shubra, a few miles to the north of Cairo, and ends at Zagazig. From that town a branch canal conveys fresh water through the desert to the west bank of the canal. Thus the British garrison would be wholly dependent for their water supply upon the good-will of the Egyptian government. It was taking too great a risk. An enterprising enemy would make the cantonment untenable in the course of a few hours : a company of pioneers would suffice a competent engineer for his labour, and a ton of explosives for his tools. Nor would the construction of an emergency distilling plant remove that objection : for hostile aircraft in an hour or two, can destroy machinery beyond hope of repair. Milner in short had no need to invite military opinion upon the point : civilians equally with soldiers can perceive the hazards, which the occupation of either bank of the canal would provoke. It was no answer to protest that interruption of the supply to the British troops would also condemn the Egyptian population of Port Said and Suez to perish from thirst : for war is a stranger to compassion, and an enemy acts first and reflects later.

But Milner could be magnanimous enough. Time and again in the course of negotiation he modified his claims in the hope of bringing about agreement. He aspired to a permanent settlement, and to achieve it he was prepared to sacrifice even the need of Great Britain to control Egypt's foreign policy. His original programme had contemplated no more than according to her the right of consular representation, and Milner only gave way with grave misgiving. He knew that the concession would excite suspicion in England, he doubted whether Egypt could afford the luxury of a multitude of embassies, and he suspected that each new chancellery would become a centre of intrigue. These objections Zaghlul met with plausible replies. He urged that Egypt's readiness to enter into a covenant with England was suffi-

cient evidence of her friendliness and he ridiculed the belief that her government would establish diplomatic agencies in every capital. Milner uncertain of the value of these assurances, was greatly perplexed. If he held to his point, Zaghlul warned him to expect Egypt's repudiation of any settlement: if he yielded, his own government might refuse to sanction an agreement so at variance with their ideals. He thought long and profoundly over his decision: then with his customary instinct for compromise, he gave way gracefully.

He fell back upon another approach: he desired to invest Great Britain with the office of protecting the interests of the foreign communities. It was an ingenious suggestion. Egyptian legislation would be relieved from the restraints of the past, and Great Britain would obtain indirectly the privileged position that she sought. There was certainly some need to assure Europe that an independent Egypt would not impair the rights and privileges enjoyed by the foreign community. Hitherto the occupation had virtually guaranteed their continuance: but the termination of British control might induce the Powers to reconsider their position. Sooner or later one or other of them would intervene, and Egypt be embarrassed how to defend her interests. British diplomacy might find a peaceful issue: but His Majesty's government would first have to assure themselves of Egypt's innocence of offence, or alternatively persuade her rulers to compound the offence. Milner thought it would be more simple, if Great Britain mediated between Egyptians and other communities from the first. There was no difficulty about procedure: she had only to gather into her own hands the capitulary interests of the various Powers. That transfer of authority would be to the benefit of Egypt, since she would then deal with one instead of thirteen individual governments. Of Great Britain's desire to modify the capitulations, Egypt was already assured. Cromer had spoken with no uncertain voice upon the point, and His Majesty's government, when announcing the establishment of a protectorate, had pledged themselves to undertake the task. An inquiry had been duly opened, and a commission appointed to study reform. But a passion to purge Egypt of all judicial and administrative defect,

proved the ruin of this commission's labours. Instead of confining investigation to legal anomalies, members inquired into the procedure of provincial councils, municipalities and other public bodies. The task was of too great magnitude, and the more important points at issue were buried under the reports of nine sub-committees. But out of the deliberations there arose one central idea : the need of abolishing the consular courts, and replacing them by the Mixed tribunals. Unhappily foreign opinion was divided. While one section favoured British principles of law, others hotly opposed their introduction. An interim report published in March 1917 was none too well received : the draft law of April 1920 provoked a louder outcry. Certainly there was little to say in defence of the consular court. Its justice was often partial, its procedure admittedly defective. But the Mixed tribunals also had their critics,[1] and the European community was perhaps less enamoured with them than Milner suspected.[2]

But he was seeking reform not revolution, and as evidence of good faith, he was prepared to guarantee to the nationals of all Powers closing their consular courts, the same treatment that Great Britain accorded her own subjects. From Egypt in turn he claimed the right of His Majesty's government to intervene, when her legislation affected all residents. Zaghlul at heart was indifferent whether a single or several Powers guarded the capitulations. To the advantages of Milner's proposal he was not blind. No Egyptian knew better than he how impossible was progress, so long as one or other obstinate government found it convenient to block fiscal and legislative reform : no Egyptian perceived more clearly than he the improbability of Egypt by her own efforts mending that lamentable state of affairs. International jealousy would be more acute, and the inclination of each Power to squeeze the Egyptian government more

[1] Speaking of the mixed tribunals, Piola Caselli, a high legal authority, described them thus : *Une organisation judiciaire défectueuse et une procédure qui favorise la fraude et la chicane.* (*L'Egypte contemporaine*, January, 1914, page 72.)

[2] The British community issued a manifesto of defiance. "Your liberties and interests in Egypt," the document began, "are threatened." The French and Italian chambers of commerce also protested.

pronounced. And fired with desire to set Egypt free from all hampering restrictions upon her sovereignty, Milner further proposed to abolish the commission of the public debt. It had become obsolete by the process of time. For many years the commission had performed purely formal duties, and its presence in Cairo only reminded Egyptians of that painful period in the history of their country, when the State was perilously near bankruptcy. Without money and without credit, the Khedive Ismail in 1876 had suspended payment of treasury bills. To his simple mind, the manœuvre appeared the most natural line of retreat: but he quickly discovered that repudiation is the only sin which usury will not pardon. He could borrow no more, and Egypt passed into the hands of a receiver.

For all his quality of statesmanship, Lord Milner was very human, and throughout these negotiations, he clung to obsessions from which lesser men had shaken themselves free long ago. As he was convinced that Egypt, despite independence, would still lean upon British guidance, so he believed that Europe would consent to the transfer of capitulary rights to His Majesty's government. The theory was a little difficult to understand in light of the slow progress hitherto made in negotiations with the Powers on the point: it even appeared to some observers more probable that the Powers would seize upon any Anglo-Egyptian settlement, to study the capitulations from a new angle. There was reasonable ground for the hypothesis, since Europe had begun negotiations on the implied understanding that the occupation would continue indefinitely. The British garrison assured freedom from disorder, British control of the administration guaranteed solvency. But Milner's concessions if put into execution would remove these safeguards. The troops in Egypt would be there to defend imperial not international interests, the Englishmen in the civil service to carry out Egyptian not British policy. Moreover the governments of Europe were not particularly interested in the welfare of Egypt. Great Britain might terminate her occupation when and how she pleased: but other countries saw no reason to sacrifice their rights to help their neighbour out of her difficulty. And Lord Milner was well aware of the need of providing guarantees, which would satisfy the

world of Great Britain's intention to maintain the spirit of the capitulations, once she had become their depository. Formal assurances he recognized, would be insufficient and some more substantial sign was required to inspire confidence. He applied his mind to its search. It was a puzzling problem. On the one hand, the solution must dissipate international nervousness, on the other avoid impairing Egyptian ideals of sovereignty. There was no obvious course : expedients practicable in the past were now no longer so. It was useless, for example, to advocate, as Lord Cromer had done, the creation of a European council, or revive Sir William Brunyate's analogous proposal. Egypt would reject compromise of that type without hesitation. She had received Cromer's scheme in ominous silence : that of Brunyate had met with a plainer and more hostile reception.

Exercising his ingenuity, Milner presently bethought himself of an issue from the difficulty. He proposed that the Egyptian government should maintain in their service the financial and the judicial advisers. Each of the two Englishmen would be charged with the performance of specific duties. The first would watch the interest of the bondholder, the second the administration of Egyptian law, in so far as its exercise affected foreigners. It was an adroit and satisfactory suggestion from the British point of view, but less so perhaps from that of Egypt. She might well object to retaining these officials, when her claim to exclude all foreigners from the civil service had already been conceded. But Milner believed that further reflection would convert her to a different opinion. Egypt was about to embark without tradition or experience upon the hazardous experiment of democratic government, and in the process her ministers would stumble and grow faint. Confusion would then overtake government, unless Englishmen stayed to guide the footsteps of their successors in authority. It was less easy to tell whether they would be disposed to serve Egypt in the altered conditions. Attractive rates of compensation would persuade some to go, offers of employment elsewhere seduce others to depart. Yet in the common interest of the two countries, some must surely remain to bridge the way of transition, and in his report Milner urged

his countrymen to consider carefully their duty towards the empire, before they severed connection with the Egyptian government. The advice might have fallen upon deaf ears, but for the knowledge that the financial and judicial advisers were staying also.

Such in outline were Milner's proposals, and armed with a copy of them and a note admitting the author's responsibility for the concessions, Mohammed Pasha Mahmud with three colleagues,[1] sailed for Egypt in the last days of August, 1920. They left unblessed by Zaghlul, ignorant of his intentions. Not until the envoys were safely on the high seas, did he break silence, and review the conversation in London. His message addressed to the people of Egypt, was incomplete and inconclusive. He offered no advice, he gave no indication of his own views : Egypt must express her opinion before he published his. Such was the gist of a communication, which ended with the pious hope that the Almighty would direct the nation. It would have been more useful, if Zaghlul had explained where Divine guidance was most needed. But prudence forbade him to do so, and the people did not stop to ask themselves the significance of the omission. It seemed to them that in this battle of wits, their leader had triumphed at the expense of his antagonist, and they expressed that belief in the enthusiastic welcome they gave to Mohammed Mahmud. His progress through the Delta was like that of a beloved general returning from a victorious campaign. At every point large and friendly crowds assembled to cheer his passage, and the streets of Cairo were thronged with deputations from every town and village in Egypt, burning to assure him of their confidence in Zaghlul. In the provinces, representative bodies were hurriedly convoked, and as hurriedly approved Milner's proposals : [2] had the country then and there been polled, it would undoubtedly have confirmed these decisions. For

[1] Lutfi Bey Said, Abdel Latif Bey Makhabatti, and Ali Bey Maher accompanied him.

[2] On the 16th September, seven days following the landing of the mission in Egypt, forty-nine out of fifty-one surviving members of the Legislative Assembly deliberated upon the memorandum. Two refused to express an opinion, and two voted for rejection. The remaining forty-five accepted the proposals.

not only were the concessions more liberal than public opinion anticipated, but a settlement held out hope of getting rid of martial law. Peace had existed now for two years, yet Egypt was still subject to this obnoxious form of rule. The excuse that an army in the field needed its continuance, was no longer valid. The Egyptian expeditionary force had disappeared. Syria was evacuated, Palestine under a separate command, and Egypt garrisoned by troops on a peace footing. Martial law in short had lost its original virtue, and become an instrument of civil authority. Yet the High Commissioner struggling to maintain some kind of constitutional government, cannot fairly be blamed for the fact. The embers of disorder were still smouldering in the capital, and an indiscreet word or imprudent act of authority was often sufficient to fan them into a blaze. Throughout the year 1920 ministers were bombed, British officers and men assassinated, and towns and villages scenes of rioting. Apologists of this period have not hesitated to declare that indignation at martial law provoked the commission of these outrages : but Allenby may be excused if he did not accept the reasoning as sufficient. He did endeavour to confine his exercise of martial law to the duty of keeping order : [1] but beyond that point, he dared not go. None the less it is possible that Englishmen in Egypt had forgotten how dearly mankind prizes the privileges of liberty. It was as precious to the Egyptian as to others : for it is in his nature also to come and go, to talk and write, to trade and live, as fancy leads him. To thoughtful men martial law however necessary in war, in peace is a dismal anomaly : a contradiction of authority, that in theory lives by the freedom it affords, and not by what it takes away.[2] They were weary of it.

But presently a minority implacably hostile to England, lifted up its voice, and bade Egypt reflect before she yielded her birthright. A sense of patriotism was responsible for

[1] As an illustration, it may be noted that the High Commissioner did not rescind the numerous military proclamations controlling the sale of liquor until the 19th February, 1921.

[2] When a few months later the Egyptian government published a decree dealing with agricultural rents, the High Commissioner refused it the sanction of martial law. The decree therefore could not be applied to foreigners.

part of the opposition : other and less worthy motives inspired the rest. The political enemies of Zaghlul sought to make capital out of Milner's proposals, and to oust him from public esteem. From the printing press there poured an increasing stream of pamphlets and leaflets, urging the people to reject the settlement. Over this literature Milner in his report passes lightly : but its effect was more successful than he and others with him supposed. Sharp eyes discovered damaging admissions in one paragraph of the text, wilful obscurities in the next, and under their onslaught Egypt repented her early enthusiasm. Men who hitherto had warmly supported the proposals as a satisfactory basis for future negotiations, now recanted their opinion, and hurriedly made their reservations. Zaghlul watching from Europe the course of the campaign, noted the change in public opinion and took advantage of the knowledge. Soon it was rumoured that he disapproved of Milner's terms, and had only refrained from speaking out through loyalty to his colleagues. The whisper was enough to turn the scale.

A host of reservations emasculated Milner's text. They covered a multitude of subjects, relevant and irrelevant to political settlement : but through them all ran two imperious demands. First that Great Britain must formally withdraw the protectorate, and secondly acknowledge Egypt's sovereignty over the Sudan. Until these concessions were made, there would be no agreement. Such was Egypt's answer. Lord Milner was not in a position to negotiate upon either demand. His terms of reference left no doubt of Great Britain's decision to maintain the protectorate, the Anglo-Egyptian convention of the 19th January, 1899, had definitely settled the relations of the two countries in the Sudan. He had therefore announced at an early stage that he must exclude the Sudan from discussion, and to that decision Zaghlul raised no objection. None the less it would be improper to assume that he or any other Egyptian considered the convention as the last word upon the subject. Egypt had signed it, but under pressure and not under conviction, and Zaghlul's silence was no indication that he agreed with Milner's argument. It would certainly not win consent in Egypt ; to acknowledge her right to sufficient water from the Sudan for the irrigation of the existing area

of cultivable land was satisfactory, but to offer no more than a fair share of any increased supply that capital and labour might produce in the future, was unlikely to satisfy a people who claimed dominion over the Nile from mouth to source. It might indeed have been wiser, if Lord Milner having excluded the Sudan from discussion, had made no comment in the pages of his report upon the Egyptian claim to sovereignty over that country.[1] He was certainly under no obligation to do so. Its relations with Great Britain and Egypt were outside the terms of his reference, and it would have been enough to state that he had informed Zaghlul of that fact. He could hardly hope that his views would alter Egyptian opinion, nor were words needed to remind his own countrymen of their rights under the convention of 1899. That agreement was still fresh in their memory. He admitted that at various periods Egypt had overrun the Sudan, and had established forms of occupation: but he contended that such conquests had been no more than partial, and he would not agree that Egypt and the Sudan had ever formed a single kingdom. The opinion of Milner will always command respectful attention: but his historical review of Egypt's connection with the Sudan cannot be accepted as exact.[2]

Once again a wave of hot indignation swept over Egypt, and held Milner's proposals up to ridicule. Great Britain, rash politicians declared, had invented her own mandate, and by a trick persuaded Europe to countenance it. But Egypt was not to be deceived by the trick: she refused to accept the concessions or entertain the counterclaims. To no purpose was she reminded that the proposals bound no one but their signatories, and that they were intended to serve only as the basis of future negotiation: she would listen neither to reason, nor to explanation. Only one provision escaped rejection: the offer to defend Egypt against foreign aggression. For the rest, the Egyptian would not admit Great Britain's claim to a privileged position in his country, or to the maintenance of a permanent garrison for the protection of the Suez Canal. Neither did he want her assistance in suppressing capitulary rights, nor her support

[1] D. Chapter III, *Report of the Special Mission to Egypt.*
[2] See Chapter IX.

in the league of nations. It was his fixed belief that his own government would make a better bargain than the British with the Powers and that Europe would open her arms to him.

But Mohammed Mahmud had not left London to refute fallacies and doctrines : his mission was more humdrum. He was required to deliver a message, not to interpret it : to obtain information, not to impart it. That task might have been possible in other countries where emotion sways mankind less : it was impracticable in Egypt. There sentiment runs riot, and no man can calculate with certainty upon the trend of public opinion. Nor could Mohammed Mahmud afford to wait on in Cairo, when Milner and Zaghlul were impatiently expecting his return. He had endeavoured throughout his brief stay to follow loyally the spirit of his instructions. He had kept his own counsel : he remembered that he was an envoy, and not a missionary. But he was frequently embarrassed to know how to act. His party was neither countenanced by the sovereign nor accredited by the executive : time and again Zaghlul had proudly proclaimed that his authority sprang from the electorate and Mohammed Mahmud was constrained to abide by that confession. Thus he avoided the palace, and he kept away from the ministries. It was an error of judgment. He had come to ascertain the national will, and the opinion of the Sultan and that of the prime minister were part of it.

Lord Milner counting on the first reports, believed that the majority of Egyptians wholeheartedly approved his proposals, until more precise and later information bade him beware of over-optimism. The truth no doubt was difficult to ascertain. The returning messengers could only speak of the opinion of educated men : the proletariate, inarticulate and ignorant, had had no opportunity of expressing their views. But it was soon clear that nothing would be gained by continuing conversation in London. Mandates and terms of reference tied the hands of both parties, and on the 9th of November Milner and Zaghlul met for the last time ; Egypt, if Zaghlul was to be believed, declined to pursue negotiations until His Majesty's government renounced the protectorate and admitted Egyptian rights in the Sudan.[1]

[1] See manifesto of the Wafd in Cairo, dated 23rd December, 1920.

Nor was this the only demand upon the good nature of Great Britain. She would also have to admit that the independence of Egypt did not necessitate any acknowledgment of British supremacy, or the guardianship of capitulary privileges. They were claims that Milner, for all his desire to reach agreement, could not entertain. A liberal and generous tone inspired his farewell words, and although he reluctantly acknowledged the existence in Egypt of latent hostility towards Great Britain, he refused to believe in its permanence. He counted upon time to dissipate misunderstanding, and upon Zaghlul's assistance in the task. That hope many Egyptians no less than Englishmen reciprocated.

CHAPTER XIV

SOVEREIGNTY

The rupture of negotiations in London coincided with a startling fall in prices, and Egypt felt the repercussion. War had exhausted the purchasing power of the consumer, and cotton in common with all production was unsaleable. It was a dismal conclusion to dreams of wealth, that had filled the mind of the Egyptian agriculturist for many months. He had been carried away by the prevailing madness, and had speculated upon a confident belief that demand for cotton would increase. In haste to grow rich, he tore up his cereals, and planted cotton in their place. For awhile it seemed as if his confidence was correct. Prices rose until they touched a fabulous figure.[1] Yet the cultivator would not sell, expecting a further advance. He was too greedy. Before winter set in, the tide had turned. The market broke, spinners defaulted, and the fellah was left with stocks of unginned cotton on his hands. But Egypt supported the period of depression better than many other nations : her people and her government had done very well out of the war. The first had paid off their liabilities, and the second had put by substantial balances out of revenue.[2] So much was to the good : but these indications of national prosperity had a reverse side. Wealth was unequally distributed, and the poorer classes, despite a general though belated advance in wages, were less able than ever to support the cost of living. For that misfortune the government

[1] Cotton which had fallen to 14 dollars a kantar in 1914, advanced to 190 dollars in the spring of 1920.

[2] In 1914, the Reserve fund stood at £E.5,102,000 : in 1920 it was at £E.17,117,000. During the same period, deposits at banks increased from £E.6,500,000 to £E.35,000,000, and loans on mortgages sank from £E.40,000,000 to £E.28,000,000. (*Financial Adviser's Budget*, note, 1920.)

could think of no permanent cure. They were not in a position to tax the profits of the trader and landowner, and they could think of no more heroic remedy than the provision of food at under cost price. The purchase of supplies in the world's markets undoubtedly achieved that aim, but at heavy cost to the treasury. Larger quantities were bought than necessary, and their distribution was ill-organized. The misfortune arose partly from lack of vision, and partly from the rashness of entrusting operations of this magnitude to inexperienced hands. Yet of the national control of food in Egypt during the years of war and after, this much may fairly be said: while bearing in mind the interests of the cotton producer, the government succeeded in feeding a population of 13,000,000 at a yearly cost of less than two shillings a head. It was a trifling insurance to pay for the benefit obtained.[1]

Occupied in contemplation of the economic misfortunes, which had descended with such swiftness, Egypt temporarily lost her interest in politics. News of the breakdown of negotiations in London attracted singularly little comment, and but for the knowledge that martial law still continued, it is possible that the people would have settled down to the existing order of things. But His Majesty's ministers could not afford to take matters so lightly. They had commissioned a colleague to report, and they could not entirely ignore his findings. Further to that reflection was the need of reaching a settlement with Egypt for other reasons. The political horizon was far from clear in the winter of 1920–21, and the commitments of the army, reduced almost to peace establishment, were still exceedingly heavy. Every quarter of the old world seemed in need of garrisons. Silesia, Constantinople, Mesopotamia, Palestine and the Rhine all needed troops, and Ireland sucked in every available rifle left.

[1] An appendix (Government purchase, control and disposal of cereals 1914–1920) of the financial adviser's note to the Budget of 1923, contains an unvarnished account of the transactions. From this document, it appears that the food control of Egypt cost the government in all £E.9,600,000, of which sum £E.8,770,000 was lost in 1920 and 1921. On the other hand it is worthy of remark that Great Britain wrote off during the same period £E.150,000,000, and Switzerland £E.12,000,000. Sir E. M. Dowson's note is worth reading by students of food control during the years of war.

Labour at home also was restless and domineering. An alliance of trade unions had broken down, but the menace of a general strike still hung over industrial England. Prudent men observing the signs, earnestly desired to limit national responsibilities, and the cabinet no less impressed with the urgency, admitted the unsatisfactory nature of the protectorate, and invited Egypt to begin fresh negotiations on that basis.[1]

It was an unexpected but very welcome concession, and Egypt joyfully read the High Commissioner's announcement of it. The cabinet resigned, and Adli becoming prime minister, announced his intention to proceed to London at the head of an official delegation. The news shocked Zaghlul in Paris, still accounting himself the representative of the people, and a telegram inviting him to become a member of the delegation, roused him to protest that he would serve under no one's leadership. He became anxious about his own popularity, and went back to Egypt. He should never have been given a passport. If authority was hasty in expelling him in 1919, it was doubly so in permitting him to return two years later. No class of the population particularly wanted him at that moment. The educated Egyptian was supporting Adli, the fellah was indifferent, and many members of the Wafd were contemplating their resignation. It was pretty clear from the day that Zaghlul landed what would happen. Round him would collect every desperate spirit, and rob Adli of the boast that a united Egypt was behind him.

A few days were sufficient to prove that Zaghlul would not be dispossessed without a struggle, and on the 18th March he declared that he must lead the delegation, and that he must nominate a majority of its members. He followed up that notice by a second, proclaiming Great Britain's withdrawal of the protectorate to be illusory and declaring that he alone could obtain unfettered independence. He was full of fire, but in Adli he met his equal in courage. For a time Adli bore with insult and threat, out of respect to Zaghlul's services : but patience had its limits, and soon he

[1] 26th February, 1921. (*Négociations entre le gouvernement Egyptien et le gouvernement Britannique*, 1921. Government Press, Cairo, 1923.)

announced that as head of executive government, he could not surrender the leadership of the delegation to a private individual. Zaghlul understood the implication, and declared open war. Fighting for political existence, he threw away every scruple.[1] His speeches became more provocative as his lieutenants dropped away, and of the sad events that followed upon his return to Egypt, he must bear part of the responsibility. He laid the fire, and an unlucky accident in Tanta lit it. The police fired upon a passing procession, and killed and wounded a number of persons. Egypt was profoundly moved by the news. She had hoped to have heard the last of these bloody encounters, and to have found a prime minister who would prohibit them. Zaghlul took her indignation to signify a turn of the tide in his favour, and he redoubled his efforts to frighten Adli into submission. He planned a strike of government officials, he encouraged indiscipline in the schools, and he denounced ministers as tyrants and traitors.[2] Adli relying upon the High Commissioner's backing, picked up the challenge. He ordered the Egyptian army to support the police, he reimposed the press censorship. Cairo responded to these measures, Alexandria treated more leniently, plotted mischief. Processions and demonstrations organized in that town by the local Wafd grew bolder and more menacing. Windows and heads were broken, shops plundered, and solitary Europeans set upon and maltreated. Yet Adli would not interfere, and counselled the commandant of police to stay his hand.[3] The ambition of the prime minister was plain enough. He desired to go to London with clean hands, to have no repetition of the ugly incident of Tanta elsewhere in Egypt. It was a very praiseworthy wish, but irresolution on the part of the executive was unlikely to consummate it. Unchecked, the rougher elements of the population dropped political issues, and plunged into xeno-

[1] See his speech delivered at Shubra, a suburb of Cairo, on the 25th April, where he likened Adli to "George V. negotiating with George V." Mohammed Pasha Mahmud, Abdel Aziz Bey Fahmi and Hamid Pasha Basel at once retired from the Wafd.

[2] In a violent speech at the Continental Hotel in Cairo on the 7th May, Zaghlul said: "Egypt had not made all its sacrifices in order that Adli and his companions might tyrannize over it."

[3] See page 11, *Egypt No. III, 1921.*

phobia. Belatedly the British troops cleared the streets, and restored order : but many lives had been sacrificed by then. Of a truth this sad business in Alexandria during the month of May, 1921, reflected little credit upon any party to it. The local leaders disappeared at the first outburst of passion, the Egyptian army failed in its duty,[1] and the executive displayed a lamentable weakness. Nor can it be said that the High Commissioner acted with his customary decision. The maintenance of order was no doubt primarily the responsibility of the Egyptian government and not his : but so long as the protectorate continued, Europeans were entitled to look to Great Britain for protection. Allenby's delay in taking action was the more surprising, in that a successful issue of the approaching negotiations largely depended upon the capacity of the government to keep order, and nothing was more likely to bring about their breakdown than an outburst of xenophobia. The High Commissioner acknowledged his responsibility a little late.[2]

Zaghlul was not wholly responsible for the disorder : it was less political than anti-foreign. Nor did he accuse England of promoting it, or charge her troops with the shooting of unoffending Egyptians. That indictment he reserved for Adli. He still indeed harboured the hope that His Majesty's government would call upon him, and in answer to some soothing words from Allenby, he declared that disagreement only existed between Egypt and her ministers. But as Adli's departure for London drew near, Zaghlul's language became more intemperate. "Let the delegation go," he cried, "and for equipment let it take the wrath and reprobation of the people. It can only come to grief." It was his last despairing cry. Five days later the Egyptian delegation sailed.

There was never much chance of the negotiations in London reaching satisfactory conclusion : misunderstanding and obstinacy blocked the way. Lord Curzon in charge of the British cause, expected some return for the withdrawal of the protectorate : Adli imagined that His Majesty's government having yielded on one point, would give way upon

[1] See page 259, *Egypt No. III, 1921.*

[2] On the 26th May he published a communication to that effect. But order had then been restored.

others. Both were mistaken, and discussion brought the parties no nearer. Only upon the wisdom of an alliance between the two countries and the justice of a civil service purely Egyptian, were they in agreement. On all other points in dispute, British and Egyptian opinion found no common ground. The claims of His Majesty's government to keep a permanent garrison on Egyptian territory, to retain the services of British advisers in the ministries of finance and justice, and to associate the High Commissioner with the direction of Egypt's foreign policy, Adli curtly refused. In his judgment admissions of that type, reasonable and even essential preliminaries of settlement, in the belief of Lord Curzon, struck at the base of Egyptian sovereignty.

The struggle waged fiercest over the troops. Curzon began by postulating their duties,[1] the protection of imperial communications, the safety of foreign interests, the defence of Egypt's territorial integrity and the suppression of serious internal disorder. To discharge these obligations, His Majesty's government desired leave to station the garrison, where military authority thought best. It was a claim which Adli, whatever his inclination, dared not concede. British anxiety upon the subject of imperial communications, Egypt vaguely understood, but not the need of a garrison, for other purposes. If disorder in Alexandria had led to the employment of British troops, "*c'est qu'elles se trouvaient là, et que l'autorité Egyptien avait compté sur leur intervention en cas de necessité*,[2] was Adli's singular explanation. There was a second battle over the new duties of the financial adviser. His Majesty's government proposed that he should be empowered to forbid the issue of external loans and assignment of revenue by the Egyptian government to their creditors. The demand drew from Adli a spirited reply, and he ridiculed the need of this veto. He could perceive no analogy between the conditions of Egypt in 1921, and in 1876. Then her revenue was only £E.9,500,000, it stood now at £E.40,000,000; then the annual charges of the public debt amounted to £E.7,500,000,

[1] Note of 13th July, 1921. (*Négociations entre le gouvernement Egyptien et le gouvernement Britannique*, 1921. Government Press, Cairo, 1923.)

[2] Note of 26th July, 1921.

they had sunk now to £E.4,000,000.[1] Further, Egypt had learnt the importance of adjusting expenditure to income, and required no prompting to keep the moral before her eyes. He used the same argument in objecting to the appointment of a judicial commissioner; Egypt would not require his help in legislation, nor the Mixed tribunals in conducting their business. If other Powers entrusted their diplomatic representatives with the task of watching over the interests of nationals, Great Britain might follow the example. In short, he would concede to the two commissioners only the performance of formal duties.[2] Leaving the difference, Lord Curzon passed on to his third claim. Egypt was to acknowledge the exceptional position of the High Commissioner, to enter into no agreement with other Powers before consulting him, and to be satisfied with consular representation abroad. In return His Majesty's government would welcome the presence of an Egyptian High Commissioner in London, and would undertake to watch over Egyptian diplomatic interests. In Adli's judgment, it was a one-sided bargain.

A month of conversation and interchange of notes thus passed, and agreement was no nearer. The military business was the greatest stumbling-block. Adli had gone as far as he dared in admitting the right of Great Britain to guard imperial communications, and Curzon considered how he could meet Egyptian prejudice without sacrificing his principle. He dropped the claim to interfere in internal disorder, he offered to review other military details at the end of ten years. It was to no purpose. To Adli as to every member of his delegation, the presence of a British garrison in Egypt elsewhere than on the east bank of the Suez Canal, signified a military occupation. He said so in plain terms, and a note

[1] Adli's own arguments bore witness to the benefit that the British occupation had bestowed upon Egypt. He placed the national wealth now at £E.1,000,000,000, and estimated Egyptian ownership of the public debt at one-third of its total, £E.94,000,000. It would have been more generous had he confessed that Egypt owed some of this good fortune to England's capable administration.

[2] The financial commissioner was to perform the duties, hitherto the province of the commissioners of the public debt: the judicial commissioner to displace the Egyptian procureur-général in all suits to which Europeans were a party.

of remonstrance crept into Curzon's answer. "Your reply," he wrote, "is not on the lines I asked for, and fully expected to receive."[1] The rebuke did not improve the chances of settlement, and conversation drifted to subjects unrelated to the main issue. The future of the Suez Canal Company was one,[2] submarine cable rights a second, compensation for dispossessed foreign officials a third.[3] But these studies, however interesting and instructive, did not contribute to agreement, and in the last days of October, Curzon and Adli perceived that they were wasting one another's time. The first had been no more successful than Milner, the second than Zaghlul. From the deadlock only one conclusion could be drawn: a treaty would never come about through the process of negotiation.

Meanwhile Lord Curzon's temper was rising. He was unaccustomed to failure, and his patience had been exhausted. On the 10th November he presented the Egyptian delegation with an ultimatum in the form of a perpetual treaty,[4] "a bond of peace, amity and alliance," that terminated the protectorate, and recognized Egypt as a sovereign State under a constitutional monarchy. The treaty conceded her right to diplomatic representation abroad, but permitted Great Britain to maintain on Egyptian territory a permanent garrison. It further required Egypt to consult the High Commissioner before appointing foreigners, other than British, to the civil service, and to continue her existing military and financial assistance to the Sudan in return for a fair share of the water of the Nile. Adli welcomed the opportunity to state his own views. He avoided none of the issues. He complained of the reproduction of formulas already considered and rejected by his delegation, he described the treaty as confirming Great Britain's occupation of Egypt. He had not introduced the subject of the Sudan,

[1] Note of 28th July, addressed to Adli Pasha.

[2] On the 17th August, and again on the 13th October, the Foreign office desired to include in the treaty of alliance the proposal recommended by Sir E. Gorst in 1909 and rejected by the general assembly, to prolong the company's concession by a period of forty years.

[3] Note of 6th August, addressed to Adli Pasha.

[4] See *Egypt No. 4, 1921*, which contains the text of the suggested treaty dated 10th November and Adli's reply dated 15th of the month.

but he now gave notice that the Egyptian people would accept no agreement, which refused them sovereignty of its territory and ownership of the Nile. His Majesty's government retorted by defining their attitude.[1] Egyptians were to know that their interests and those of England were inseparable. Through Egypt ran imperial communications, whose security affected 350,000,000 subjects of the king. The action of Turkey in 1914 had strengthened the ties between the two countries, and out of the knowledge that a common danger could be averted only by joint action under a single command, sprang the protectorate. Egypt had thus passed scatheless through the ordeal of war and similar association would provide shelter in the future. But that good fortune carried also certain obligations. Acceptance of a British garrison on Egyptian soil was one, of advice in finance and in foreign policy a second. Yet if in these matters His Majesty's government could not yield, they were prepared also to pursue a policy more in harmony with Egyptian ideals than in the past ; to extend Egyptian influence in the civil service, and to withdraw martial law once an act of indemnity was passed. Nothing would be gained by exaggerating rights, by appealing to ignorance and passion. "The world," concluded this despatch, "is suffering from the cult of fanatical and disrupting nationalism." Let Egypt beware lest she also become infected with the malady. It was plain speaking.

The departure from Egypt of the delegation had left Zaghlul a clear field, and he gave the absent prime minister neither credit nor quarter. Yet throughout the summer, Adli held the advantage. He was head of the executive, and he had gone to London with the consent of the Sultan and at the invitation of the British government. Moreover he had the educated classes solidly behind him. The scales had turned. Egypt was weary of politics, and had bade god-speed to her envoy. Of the original Wafd, only three members remained, and the dissentients forming a party of their own, accused their late leader of having sacrificed principle to ambition. For the moment Zaghlul was too occupied with filling the gaps in his ranks to answer the charge, and

[1] Communication addressed by the High Commissioner to the Sultan dated 3rd December. (*Egypt No. 4, 1921.*)

pocketed the insult. His conceit now outstripped discretion. He despatched cables to the London press, declaring the people were being flogged and imprisoned for daring to cheer him; he addressed letters to members of the House of Commons, signing them as the representative of the Egyptian nation. To make good that claim he planned a political tour in the Delta, and invited a selected party of Labour members [1] to witness to his supremacy. It was an adroit manœuvre, since either the executive must forbid it or impotently watch the triumph of its enemy. While Egypt looked on, Allenby interposed, and ordered Zaghlul to stay at home. He answered the rebuff with an ultimatum. "Not a single British soldier," he cried, "must remain on Egyptian soil. If negotiation fails, Egypt will fight like Ireland."

He left nothing undone that would increase his influence. He made overtures to the palace. They were unsuccessful: His Highness the Sultan was too acute to walk into a trap. He spoke to syndicates of labour, to communists, to every section of society, in short, that would stop and listen. Forbidden to tour Lower Egypt, he determined to do so in Upper. It was an unfortunate excursion. His passage up the Nile was marked by riot and bloodshed: from Minia to Luxor the country was thrown into confusion. Climax came at Assiut on the 14th October. The town seethed with excitement: half the population favoured Zaghlul, the rest were for Adli. Shots were exchanged and lives needlessly sacrificed. The situation grew more critical, when Egyptian troops stationed in the town broke their ranks to cheer the visitor, and an armed flotilla of the opposition anchored in mid-stream, to board his steamer after dark. With some difficulty Zaghlul was induced to continue the voyage, and leave the inhabitants of Assiut to settle their own domestic differences. It was too late: the excitement had spread into the neighbouring provinces of Sohag and Qena. But the government were at last alive to the danger of permitting the head of the Wafd to move about at will in Upper Egypt, and Zaghlul was forbidden to land elsewhere. That decision should have been taken before. But martial law was never consistent in its application. If it was politic to deny Zagh-

[1] Messrs. Swann, Mills, Lawson and Lunn.

lul the freedom of the Delta, it was surely no less so to refuse him that of Upper Egypt.

The tumult did not profit Zaghlul: respectable opinion throughout the country looked with horror upon it. Thirty-six members of the legislative assembly met privately on the 2nd November, and withdrew their mandate from the Wafd: wealthy men refused to subscribe further to its funds. But Zaghlul cared little for rebuke or affront. At a mass meeting held in Cairo eleven days later, he swore to live free or die, and invoked blessings on the heads of those who had perished on behalf of Egypt. His tongue quivered with calumny. Adli was the creature of the protectorate, an abettor of martial law, a partisan of espionage and corruption. They were hard words, and Adli back in Cairo, paused in the writing of his account of negotiations, to express a wish to resign. That news pushed Zaghlul to extreme lengths. He could not hope to be prime minister, but he was determined that no other should occupy the place. To that end he struggled, until the High Commissioner perceived that so long as Zaghlul remained at liberty, there could be no peace in Egypt. As the year 1922 drew to a close, that truth became more obvious. Zaghlul had the ear of the proletariate, and mischief was brewing. Happily it was confined to the towns. Cairo led the way: Alexandria, Tanta, Port Said and Suez followed. But Zaghlul had gone too far. A speech more impudent than usual, provided excuse, and on the 23rd December he and eight of his followers were arrested and deported to the Seychelles. The order of expulsion was issued too late. Adli had confessed his failure, His Majesty's government given notice of their intentions, and Zaghlul, who had prophesied this result, was once again the hero of the nation. Military proclamations forbidding banks to honour his cheques, authorizing under secretaries to act as ministers, and suppressing newspapers which questioned the wisdom of the executive,[1] served to inflame public opinion still

[1] The *Egyptian Gazette* was a notable victim. Some remarks in its issue of the 27th December caught the High Commissioner's angry eye, and he ordered the suppression of the paper "for publishing subversive statements calculated to impede military authority in the execution of their duties." The *Mokhattam* was a second paper to feel Allenby's heavy hand.

further. More Englishmen were killed,[1] and administrative chaos seemed close at hand. Uneasy and perplexed at the rupture of negotiations in London, the High Commissioner on the 17th November communicated his anxieties to the Foreign office.[2] A few days later he returned to the charge, and boldly declared that no treaties or conventions would settle the Egyptian question. Conversation was a waste of time. His Majesty's government must decide either to dragoon Egypt into submission or acknowledge her independence. There was no third course open in his belief. Allenby's own inclination leant to the second alternative, and he said as much unhesitatingly.[3] He perceived what was in store. Adli would resign and no Egyptian dare take his place. Much the same situation had come about in the spring of 1919, and Allenby was determined to forestall its approach. It required some courage to advance an opinion unlikely to find favour at home. The British people knew little of the actual state of affairs in Egypt : the press was silent on the subject and the High Commissioner's embarrassments were unknown. Allenby's mind was made up. It should be as he wished, or His Majesty's government might find another servant to carry out their policy. The hint was lost : disagreeing with his representative's judgment, the prime minister desired to learn the opinion of the advisers of the ministers of interior and justice. But Allenby was the last person in the world to accept this, and he answered it by tendering his resignation. Mr. Lloyd George, unprepared to push matters to that length, then pressed the High Commissioner to come to London. He left Cairo on the 31st January : he was back in less than a month with the independence of Egypt in his pocket. He had succeeded where more experienced statesmen, Milner and Curzon, had failed.

[1] Political murders or attempts at murder averaged two a month : a figure which led Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, chief of the imperial general staff, " to make a calculation as to the number of murders that would be necessary in Egypt and in India for those countries to achieve independence." (Page 300, Vol. II, *Life and Letters*, by Callwell. Cassell & Co., London, 1927.)

[2] *Egypt No. 1, 1922.*

[3] Despatch dated 6th December. (*Egypt No. 1, 1922.*)

Criticism of Allenby has died away, and the passage of time permits more generous judgment. It was an inspiration wholly his own. His conclusions are more commonly accepted to-day than then, and agreement it is now generally conceded, would never have been reached by negotiation, or alliance from conversation. If His Majesty's government desired settlement, they must themselves take the initiative. Such was Allenby's sagacious reasoning, and he convinced the cabinet of its wisdom. The declaration of the 28th February, 1922,[1] invested Egypt with the sovereignty she desired, and left untouched the interests which Great Britain would not relinquish. The document was brief and clear. It terminated the protectorate, it proclaimed the independence of Egypt, and it provided for the repeal of martial law. On the other hand, it reserved for future discussion, the security of imperial communications, the defence of Egypt against foreign aggression, the protection of minorities and of foreign interests, and the Sudan.

It was a charter which provided Egypt with a handsome measure of liberty. Her internal sovereignty was assured, her diplomatic freedom unrestricted. She took immediate advantage of both concessions. The Sultan assumed the sonorous title of King, the council of ministers took charge of foreign affairs : the British advisers to the ministries of interior and education resigned their appointments, and a commission met to draft the constitution and reform the electoral law. Abdel Khaled Sarwat Pasha led the government. The office was no sinecure. Its occupant stood between two fires, the palace and the residency, each expecting the new prime minister to listen to its counsel. But Sarwat, through long apprenticeship to government, had learnt the management of men in authority. Subtlety and caution were his stock-in-trade, and he made good use of both. A becoming humility won the favour of the palace, a persuasive speech of the residency. And Egypt would have supported the prime minister no less heartily, but for an angry and waspish Wafd. Reconstituted and increasingly embittered the Wafd [2] denounced all Egyptians, who held intercourse

[1] *Egypt No. 1, 1922.* Appendix III reproduces the text.

[2] The leaders, particularly the Copts, were very intemperate. At a labour meeting held in Cairo on the 23rd April, one speaker

with Great Britain's representative, while Zaghlul remained in exile. The leaders poured scorn upon the declaration of the 28th February,[1] and called for a boycott of Englishmen and of British manufacturers as Egypt's proper answer to it. Their arrest and internment were the signal for fresh disturbances, and more life was sacrificed in restoring order. Reprisals followed, and hardly a week passed without some outrage being signalled. Respectable Egyptians were as horrified as Englishmen at this continuous campaign of murder, and reprobated the authors. The denunciation was no doubt sincere, but came oddly from men of violent speech and writing. More depressing was the ease with which the criminal invariably accomplished his escape. He was never caught red-handed. Nor when the police had hunted down their quarry, did he always suffer the fate that he deserved. Military courts sat and delivered an appropriate verdict. But their sentences required confirmation, and mistaken clemency too often led to mitigation of the punishment.

This campaign of assassination was not Sarwat's only perplexity. Into the deliberations of the commission sitting to draft the new constitution, had crept the obvious intention to claim sovereignty over the Sudan. Under the declaration of the 28th February the future relations of Great Britain and Egypt towards the dependency had been left undetermined, and Sarwat perceived that the commission would presently call upon him to define them. Rather than undertake that embarrassing duty, he resigned. His tenure of authority had not been particularly successful. He had tided over the first difficult months of transition, but actually he accomplished no more. The constitution was unfinished, martial law unrepealed, and the administration still under British direction. His position had become in other ways decidedly uncomfortable. The palace was displeased with his hesitation over the Sudan, the residency thought on the other hand that he had gone too far. So he prudently dis-

compared the sacrifice of Zaghlul with the Crucifixion and likened the fatherland, liberty and Zaghlul to the Christian Trinity.

[1] Notification a fortnight later to all foreign powers that Great Britain would regard interference in the affairs of Egypt as an unfriendly act, excited particular indignation. (*Egypt No. 1, 1924.*)

appeared, and Tewfik Pasha Nessim took his place. It was not his first experience of the reins of government. As prime minister throughout the troubled months of 1920 he had borne himself courageously and well: but conditions now were less auspicious. Egypt in 1920 was keeping her eyes steadily upon London: they were directed in 1923 towards the Seychelles. Adli was back in politics, Sarwat in alliance with him, and Zaghlul's supporters were noisier than ever. It was a formidable opposition, and any reliance Nessim placed on the residency, vanished before a fresh outcrop of murder. The British community was stirred to its depths: but it was less easy to say what Allenby could do in face of the threat. He had already instructed all Englishmen to arm themselves: he went a step further now, and appointed a military governor of Cairo. That measure seemed only to provoke fresh and more insolent outrage. Bombs were thrown into military camps, and officers and soldiers lost their lives.[1] Meanwhile the Sudan had become a burning question in politics, and the issue was narrowed to a cry that the constitution must describe the sovereign as King of Egypt and the Sudan. The British government could not accept the claim. The declaration of independence had explicitly excepted the Sudan, and Egypt must abide by that decision. The hint was taken,[2] Nessim resigned, and Yehia Pasha Ibrahim his successor had the sense to drop the dispute. On the 19th April he published the text of a constitution, that placed the government of Egypt in the hands of a senate and a chamber of deputies. The constitution was followed by a bill of indemnity covering the acts of military authority, a law regulating the compensation to be paid to foreigners, who relinquished their appointments in the civil service,[3] and a proclamation announcing the end of martial law. Zaghlul was now free to return to Egypt.

A second term of exile had not softened him, and he came

[1] 12th and 27th February, and 4th March, 1923.

[2] See *Official Journal*, 10th February, 1923, for announcement by the High Commissioner that unless the commission gave way, Great Britain would retake her old liberty of action in Egypt.

[3] Commonly known as Law 28, the work of Sir Maurice Amos, the judicial adviser, and a notable example of his creative and ingenious mind. Foreigners in the service of the Egyptian government owed this accomplished lawyer a heavy debt of gratitude.

back on the 17th September, 1923, more vindictive than ever. As he had desired to ruin Adli two years earlier, so he now intended to destroy Sarwat. He spoke of the latter, unjustly enough, as a traitor, and refused in insulting words his request to defend himself before a court of princes. He then fell upon Adli. But that Egyptian was thicker skinned than Sarwat, and treated the attack with his customary indifference. Thirsting for fresh blood, Zaghlul rent deserters from the Wafd. But he was treading on dangerous ground. Men like Mohammed Ali Bey, once treasurer of the party, turned upon the old leader, and accused Zaghlul of spending money borrowed from the political chest on his own purposes,[1] others published counter manifestos [2] impugning his sincerity. These innuendoes, Zaghlul treated with contempt: his attention was concentrated upon the approaching elections. Their result was foregone: Egypt voted solidly with the Wafd.[3] Its success was thoroughly deserved. Not only had the party borne the heat and burden of the day, but its organization was admirable. There was no village or town in Egypt that the members had not canvassed.

Victory at the polling stations gave Zaghlul the laurels he had so long sought. On the 28th January, 1924, he became prime minister, and so achieved the supreme ambition of his life. It was a fitting reward of courage and pertinacity. His first use of authority was to obtain the release of all political prisoners, and he persuaded the High Commissioner to grant a wide amnesty. His own treatment of opponents was less generous. Under pretence of purifying the administration, he summarily dismissed officials whose political views ran counter to his own, and he refused Adli, Sarwat and Yehia, three ex-prime ministers, seats in the senate. He could do as he wished: his supremacy in this first of Egypt's parliaments was unquestioned. Deputies grumbled in secret, but obeyed him in public. On the occasion of King Fuad's inaugural

[1] Public opinion thought the charge improbable. Zaghlul's personal honesty has never been seriously questioned.

[2] One widely distributed in Cairo, ended with these words: "Verily hadst thou been the leader of a living nation they would have stoned thee to death."

[3] In a chamber of 211 deputies, Zaghlul could count upon 192 supporters.

speech, he announced that he should treat all amendments to it as hostile to himself, and he placed his own interpretation upon every word and phrase of the speech.[1] He was quite unscrupulous. To escape the criticism he saw would be forthcoming, he unseated his only formidable opponent in the chamber,[2] he excluded from the press gallery reporters of all independent newspapers and he formed a committee to approve questions addressed to ministers. By these expedients he made good his ascendency. Hard facts he consistently ignored. No Egyptian knew better the limitations of the declaration of the 28th February, 1922, but no one departed from them more consistently. He had no programme. Negotiation was always on his lips : the significance of the word escaped him. He spoke as if he was the only party to a bargain. His hopes were raised by a change of cabinet in England. Labour had overthrown the coalition government, and Zaghlul thought that the new-comers would reverse their predecessors' policy abroad. It was a mistake into which earlier prime ministers of Egypt had fallen, and paid for their ignorance. Zaghlul, no student of history, fell into the same trap.

Accepting the invitation of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, he went confidently enough to London. His departure was inauspicious. As he stepped into the train, a young effendi sprang forward to kill him. It was a wicked and cowardly act : reprobated by all right thinking men, but significant also of the confusion that had overtaken Egyptian politics. Even the chosen leader was not trusted. Upon Zaghlul the moral was lost. He could have stamped out these secret societies : but he dared not act, lest members of his party were enrolled in their ranks. So he went on to London, and began his conversation. It led to no result. He asked too much, he would make no concession in return. He required the withdrawal of the British troops, the dismissal of the financial and judicial advisers, the abandonment of Great Britain's claim to direct Egypt's foreign policy, to protect

[1] He interpreted the phrase " national aspirations " to mean the complete independence of Egypt and the Sudan.

[2] Mohammed Pasha Mahmud, one of his companions in London. Four village omdas, supporters of the Pasha, were also dismissed, upon the curious ground that Zaghlul desired " to rid the government of those Egyptians who are veritable obstacles to the national cause."

minorities and foreign interests, and to defend the Suez Canal.[1] Neither would he recant his declarations about the Sudan nor regret the disturbances, which they had provoked. Mr. MacDonald was frankly disappointed. He had anticipated discussion with a friendly opponent; he encountered nothing but bitter hostility. Admittedly Zaghlul was entitled to his own opinion about the Sudan: but the wisdom of emphasizing it in London was doubtful. The attitude compelled the British prime minister in turn to declare frankly that his government would maintain their predominance at all costs.[2]

Trouble in the Sudan brewing for some time back,[3] had come to a head, before Zaghlul reached London. A number of Egyptian officers stationed in Khartoum and other centres had planned to bring about a rising of the population. The plot failed to accomplish much more than a half-hearted military mutiny: but that was serious enough. It was difficult indeed to see where the shoe pinched the people of the Sudan. Taxation was light, justice impartial, and administration rigidly honest. The prosperity of the country in these favourable conditions had increased amazingly since the overthrow of the Khalifa in 1898. Standards of living were higher, and revenue had grown from £E.35,000 to £E.4,200,000. No doubt this happy achievement was largely owing to Egypt's financial assistance during the lean years. She had lent on development the substantial sum of £E.5,800,000, paid another £E.5,000,000 to meet current expenditure, and borne the cost of a large and expensive army of defence.[4] But these contributions had benefited her as well. The military interests of Egypt and the Sudan

[1] *Egypt No. 1, 1924.*

[2] *Ibid.*: Lord Parmoor in the House of Lords on the 25th June also said: "His Majesty's government are not going to abandon the Sudan in any sense whatever."

[3] In 1922, a junior officer had been convicted of promoting sedition.

[4] Egypt kept a pretty tight control over Sudan expenditure. An agreement signed between the government and the Sudan on 17th May, 1901, admitted the right of the first to "the supervision, audit, and inspection of the whole of the financial arrangements of the Sudan government." In January, 1910, a governor-general's council was created, and financial responsibility shifted to it. For account of Sudan prosperity, see Chaps. XIX to XXI, *Britain in Egypt*, by Mrs. Travers Symons. Palmer, London, 1925.

are not always easy to distinguish, and no less may be said of irrigation and railway development. It was also to the political advantage of Egypt to finance the Sudan. Money for capital expenditure could perhaps have been obtained from private sources : but the final word to be said then about the disposal of the water, would perhaps have rested with the investing public, and not with Egypt. That danger Lord Cromer foresaw and avoided.[1] None the less it is possible to understand the disappointment of Egyptian officers and civilians in the service of the Sudan government, who were rigidly confined to the humbler branches of the administration, while their country was supporting part of its cost. Murmur grew louder, when the chamber of deputies protested against Great Britain's domination of the Sudan : demonstrations in Khartoum and Omdurman followed that outburst until the governor-general using his powers, forbade their repetition. Tumult slowly subsided, and danger seemed at an end, when in September grave indiscipline in the military school warned the government of approaching trouble in the army. The railway battalion at Atbara was the most serious offender. The men broke their ranks, and spread over the town, pillaging and looting as they ran.

It was a sorry business, which a rash communiqué published by the Egyptian government made worse. An Arab unit had fired on the mutineers, and the council of ministers accused British troops of the massacre of unoffending Sudanese. The facts had been inaccurately reported. No British soldier was present at the moment, and no Sudanese had been killed. The Egyptian communiqué, in short, was as misleading as it was inexact. The Wafd took up the cry, and supported the allegations of the government. The hint was taken in the Sudan, and disturbances in Shendi, Kosti and Malakal culminated in Khartoum in the open mutiny of two platoons of Sudanese infantry. Excitement was at its zenith, when Zaghlul returned to Egypt on the 20th October. His speech was provocative. He talked vain-gloriously of his failure in London, he proclaimed his intention thenceforth to act as well as to speak.[2] Criticism of his own

[1] *Egypt No. 1, 1904.*

[2] Speech at a banquet given to the prime minister by deputies at the Continental Hotel, Cairo, on the 24th October.

procedure and methods, Zaghlul met with insolent words. His nepotism was quite shameless,[1] his selection of Egyptians for high office made with little regard to the public interest. He was on no better terms with the King than with the High Commissioner. He visited the palace, accompanied by a disorderly crowd crying "revolution or Zaghlul." The police looked on inactively: the under-secretary of state to the ministry of interior had forbidden them to interfere.[2] Tragedy drew near. On the 19th November, Sir Lee Stack, governor-general of the Sudan and sirdar of the Egyptian army, was murdered within a stone's-throw of the British residency in Cairo.

The crime cost Egypt dear: but there is no reason to lay the outrage at Zaghlul's door. He neither instigated nor approved of its commission. So much was clear to men who knew him best. He was a rebel at heart, but never a partisan of violence, and time and again he had denounced the campaign of assassination as foolish and wrong. He was too shrewd to believe that physical force settles political dispute, too astute to identify himself with either wing of his party. And yet he cannot claim complete innocence, since to his counsels he admitted men notorious for their lack of scruple, and of their ideals, if not of their plans, he could hardly have been wholly ignorant. Throughout the summer of 1924 relations between the Egyptian ministers and the residency had grown increasingly acrid, and the latter had been preparing a counterstroke. It was high time: for the government, drunk with the new and heady wine of independence, were dishonouring every obligation of the declaration of the 28th February, 1922. The Sudan was one instance in point, the savage treatment of Englishmen still

[1] He was quite frank about his reasons. Publicly he said on the 3rd November: "They (the residency) are astonished that I promote men whom the British accuse of crimes. I have many relations. I am sorry they are not all competent, for I'd like to promote them all. Then there would be a true Zaghlul ministry in name, in sense, and in blood."

[2] Ahmed Bey Nokrashi, a devoted partisan of Zaghlul. Nokrashi had given the freedom of Cairo to all processions and demonstrations. His selection for the important post of under-secretary to the ministry of interior shocked Egyptian as much as British opinion. He had no experience of its duties.

in the civil service a second, [1] the campaign of murder a third.[2] The last was the most intolerable grievance, and to humbler members of the British community it seemed as if the High Commissioner was awaiting the assassination of some highly placed official, before he took action. Loyalty to him kept them silent, and protest had not grown above a whisper, when Stack fell victim to the assassin's pistol. Then Lord Allenby threw off his hesitancy. On the afternoon of the funeral, he summoned the Egyptian government to apologize for the outrage, to discover and punish its perpetrators, to forbid demonstrations, to pay a fine of £E.500,000, to withdraw their troops from the Sudan, to maintain the offices of the financial and judicial advisers, to surrender their right to retain the services of foreign officials against the will of the latter, and to authorize the Sudan government to irrigate at their discretion all land lying between the Blue and White Niles. It was condign punishment, and the High Commissioner had not waited for a signal from home to administer it. He was only just in time. Zaghlul was about to meet the chamber of deputies, and offer his resignation. There would have then been no one in authority to whom Allenby could have presented his note. The council of ministers accepted the first four conditions, objected to the remainder. The remonstrance did not avail them. The acting governor-general of the Sudan was instructed to evacuate all Egyptian units within his jurisdiction, the admiral commanding a naval squadron lying in Alexandria harbour, to furnish a guard of marines over

[1] The slights and indignities heaped by the Zaghlul ministry upon British officials, culminated in an attack upon Mr. H. M. Anthony, director-general of the State domains. This official had been called upon to give evidence in an inquiry relating to an exchange of land between the under-secretary of state of the ministry of agriculture, a political enemy of the Wafd, and the government. Out of his own evidence a series of flimsy charges were devised against Mr. Anthony, and he was suspended from duty. It was a monstrous miscarriage of justice, since Mr. Anthony had consistently opposed the exchange, and he had no difficulty in clearing himself later.

[2] Between September, 1919, and November, 1924, forty-six outrages were committed : nineteen against officers and men of the British army, eleven against British civil servants, and sixteen against Egyptian ministers and officials. In these outrages there were more than sixty victims.

the Custom house. Zaghlul at once resigned. Yet it is fair to say that he bore himself with dignity during these gloomy days, refusing to excuse himself, and accepting the black looks of the British community as part of his purgatory.

In England the note of the High Commissioner met with less approval than Englishmen in Egypt expected. Public opinion while agreeing on the need of punishing a guilty government, was less sure of the propriety of extending the irrigation rights of the Sudan government in the valley of the Blue Nile.[1] The factor of finance entered into the subject. As matters stood, the Sennaar dam would not pay interest and sinking fund charges.[2] To allay anxiety in Egypt on the subject of her supply of water, the Sudan government had incautiously agreed to confine cultivation to 300,000 acres, an area which later and closer calculation showed to be insufficient. Compromise was still distant, when Allenby's note made further discussion unnecessary. But the British mind is singularly sensitive on the point of finance, and the least suspicion of its influence in public affairs is sufficient to arouse attention. Moreover there was some uncertainty about the wisdom of imposing the heaviest punishment upon the one class of the population, whose interests Great Britain had endeavoured to safeguard since the first days of the occupation. The agriculturist was not obviously implicated in conspiracy and his pursuit of politics had sensibly slackened since 1920. It seemed therefore a little impolitic to revive it by encouraging the belief that the Sudan government had built the Sennaar dam in order to deprive Egypt of water. It is a singular reflection in these circumstances that the High Commissioner's advisers could think of no more appropriate punishment. Presumably the note was framed to humble national pride, and the abolition of conscription or reduction of the army to the strength of a simple gendarmerie would have served the purpose better. The measure would have humiliated ministers and parliament,

[1] The secretary of state for foreign affairs appeared to voice this reflection, when he promised a commission of inquiry into the distribution of water between Egypt and the Sudan. (Debate, House of Commons, 15th December, 1924.)

[2] They were met out of profits on production under a partnership, consisting of the government, a commercial syndicate, and the cultivator. The dam cost £E.11,000,000 to construct.

and have reminded their irreconcileable supporters that the independence of Egypt was conditional upon her behaviour. There was also this further argument in favour of the alternative. Lord Dufferin had won the humble cultivator's heart by prevailing upon the Khedive Tewfik to forbid the kourbash : Allenby might have obtained the same triumph by diminishing the burden of conscription. Unhappily he did not have the inspiration.

But his time in Egypt was drawing to a close. He had been High Commissioner for six years, and he felt the need of repose. They had been stormy and eventful years : murder and intrigue had shadowed him throughout their passage. Yet in this continuous battle with adversity, he was always master of his own soul, and he will be remembered by the Egyptian people less as a captain of war, than as an apostle of clemency and peace.

CHAPTER XV

PARLIAMENT

Ahmed Pasha Ziwar, a stout good-humoured man, took up the reins of government. In his veins there ran a drop of Turkish blood, sufficient to inspire a tolerant regard for the frailties of mankind. Live and let live had been his precept throughout life, and he pursued that maxim now he was prime minister. Egypt moved more easily under his rule. She was sore at the retribution that had so suddenly descended upon her, and another driver and different ideals of administration were welcome. Ziwar had a fair field before him. Zaghlul was in retirement, his following discomfited, and parliament adjourned : Ziwar's only uncertainty lay in the attitude of the palace. Its objective was his, the restoration of discreet and ordered administration ; the puzzle lay in reconciling procedure with accepted methods of constitutional government.

Adjournment of parliament was followed by dissolution, and fresh elections were ordered to be held in the coming spring. Twelve months earlier there had been a contest between the Wafd and a handful of Egyptians, who dissociated themselves from violence, and in the struggle the latter had gone to the wall. But the Wafd on this occasion could hardly hope to repeat that success : a new and powerful political party, the Ittehad, or party of union, had entered the lists. It drew adherents from every group. Influential supporters of Zaghlul renounced their allegiance to him, partisans of Adli followed the example. Favoured by the palace, the Ittehad soon made its presence felt in the country, and Ziwar marking the omen, invited its leaders to join his cabinet. Thus strengthened, he confidently awaited the verdict of the electorate. It was disappointing. The new parliament had hardly met, before deputies recanted

their promise to forsake the Wafd. The first division in the chamber revealed the weakness of the government. Their candidate for the presidency was defeated, and Zaghlul elected by a substantial majority. Ziwar courageously faced the issue. He persuaded the King to dissolve parliament, he appointed a commission to revise the electoral law. That stroke was aimed at the Wafd : its strength was believed to lie with the ignorant and humble, and the prime minister thought by confining the vote to the educated and propertied class, he would destroy Zaghlul's following. He was mistaken : Egypt was too enamoured of democracy to be deceived by the manœuvre. But Ziwar, less observant than usual, went off on a holiday in Europe without misgiving. He had better have stayed to keep an eye upon his cabinet. Hardly had he sailed than intrigue was at work. A young and ardent supporter of the Ittehad got the ear of the acting prime minister. It was not the first venture of Hassan Pasha Nashaat into politics. His life had already been crowded with incident. He had found favour with the palace, he was on friendly terms with the residency, and he had played a part in bringing about the downfall of Sarwat in 1922 and that of Tewfik Nessim a few months later. So much gossip declared, and Egypt watched in silence Nashaat's adroit endeavour to identify the Ziwar government with the Ittehad party. It was a bold campaign favoured by the prime minister's absence abroad. A minister hostile to the Ittehad was sacrificed, and Ismail Sidki and Tewfik El Doss, his supporters, resigned in protest.

Such were the political conditions, when Lord Lloyd arrived, and made acquaintance with Egypt. She was curious to see the new-comer, of whom report spoke so freely, and the new High Commissioner, it may fairly be said, bore the scrutiny very well. His record could not be impeached. He had been a soldier, a governor, and a politician in turn, and achieved credit as each. His confident air and agreeable manner left a happy impression, and Egyptians talked of the coming of another Cromer. But Lloyd was not that, nor did Egyptian conditions in 1925 bear any analogy with those of 1883. The situation was bewildering. There was no parliament, and no apparent prospect of one in the immediate future. An electoral law

was in preparation unpopular with the country, and at variance with the late parliament's decision, a ministry was in office identified with no section of the electorate. Unseen hands were meddling in the business of government, and administration was suffering as a consequence. Early in November discontent found voice, and joining forces the Wafd and a group of moderate men calling themselves Liberal constitutionalists desired the prime minister to convene the late parliament, and so preserve the forms of the constitution. Ziwar refused, and curtly forbade deputies to meet. But the time had passed when Egyptians listened to proclamations and prohibitions of this type. Martial law was gone, and people snapped their fingers at milder authority. Unable to sit in the chamber, deputies met privately, and on the 21st November accused the prime minister of intention to violate the spirit of the constitution. Ziwar retorted by declaring the proposals of the electoral commission to be law. But he could not enforce the decree. Omdas and sheikhs flatly refused to make out new electoral rolls, and Ziwar bent to the storm in deference to the High Commissioner's advice. It was not the latter's business to tender counsel to the Egyptian executive: but in this instance he would have been imprudent to refrain. Egypt's independence was conditional upon observing certain obligations, and government in accordance with the wishes of the people was not the least of them. There was little to suggest the existence of constitutional government in the winter of 1925–26, and the High Commissioner would have failed in a plain duty, had he remained an idle spectator of a duel between the executive and the opposition. There was also a further reason for intervention: Nashaat, suspected as part author of the trouble, was still in a position to exercise influence. Relieved of his post of under-secretary of state, he had entered the royal household, and meddled too frequently in the business of government. The King was not aware of the comment, which his reputed patronage of Nashaat aroused, and upon Lord Lloyd fell the task of acquainting His Majesty with its existence. He accomplished that delicate mission successfully. Nashaat left the palace, and went as minister to Madrid. Throughout these uncomfortable weeks, the King had behaved with great

dignity and good sense. His position was often singularly embarrassing. He had given constitutional government a trial under Zaghlul, and the result was discouraging, and when he pursued a different procedure, he was at once reminded of his limitations. Great Britain had placed him on the throne, and had guaranteed the succession of his line : but it was not always easy to reconcile these obligations with his duty as the sovereign of Egypt. The two interests sometimes conflicted, and choice between them then became perplexing.

Egyptians watched with interested eyes the action of the High Commissioner, and his name for a time was on every man's lips. But the High Commissioner did not take advantage of the omens. He was new to Egypt, and his opportunities of listening to independent opinion were not many. The senior British officials had left the country, and Egyptians visited the residency less frequently. War had put a stop to the old familiar intercourse, and from the interruption society had never recovered. The Englishmen who returned to the Egyptian government from service in the field, found a High Commissioner less easy of approach than the old diplomatic agent and consul-general : everything had become more formal and more official. McMahon accustomed to the pageantry of India inaugurated the revolution, Allenby simple and unaffected like most soldiers of reputation, was in turn entangled in ceremonial. The protectorate had changed more than policy, and though the residency staff was more numerous and imposing than its predecessor, reliable information of the opinion of Egypt, outside the capital, was less easy to obtain. It would have been an opportune moment for Lord Lloyd to establish relations with the provinces. He was pretty sure of a friendly reception. Parliament was not sitting, Zaghlul was engaged in counting up his chances in the coming electoral campaign, and Ziwar indifferent how the High Commissioner spent his time. The hour was favourable in other ways. The provinces were moody and sulky. Cotton values were approaching pre-war prices, and lawlessness was spreading : from every quarter there had been complaint of the insufficiency of summer irrigation water, and its unpunctual delivery. The introduction of politics into details of the

administration added to the discontent. The evil had been bad enough under the reign of the Wafd: the Ittehad cabinet pushed the tactics of their predecessors to even greater lengths. The appointment of village authority, the omdas and sheikhs, now depended upon the colour of a candidate's opinions, more than upon his qualifications. There would have been little doubt in these circumstances of the High Commissioner's welcome. But the chance was missed, and it did not come Lloyd's way again.[1]

It was soon evident that Zaghlul would dominate the elections of 1926 as he had done their predecessors. Before polling began, he was modest enough to declare that he would not accept leadership of the government: but that resolution was short-lived. No sooner did he find himself with an unexpectedly large majority, than he changed his mind. It was too late. The final word no longer rested with him: His Majesty's government could not co-operate with an Egyptian, who boasted his intention to ignore the reserves of the declaration of independence. That attitude had led to sufficient disaster already, and Great Britain could not suffer a repetition of the events of 1924. But Zaghlul would not give way, and deadlock again seemed imminent, when the outcome of a conspiracy trial strengthened the High Commissioner's hand. Among the accused were two leading members of the Wafd, an ex-minister and an ex-under-secretary of state. The trial ended in the acquittal of both. It was à surprising verdict to many men: for the evidence produced seemed sufficient to convict one at least of the pair. Other consequences followed. The British judge [2] differed from his Egyptian colleagues, and rather than be a party to what

[1] Some months later, at the invitation of a group of notables, Lord Lloyd went to Minia. Parliament was then sitting, and took exception to the visit. It had no good reason to do so, since private motive had prompted the excursion. But deputies did not trouble to examine the facts. Led by ex-ministers, they reprimanded the mudir for his presence at the reception, and repudiated the hosts. It was a poor illustration of Egyptian manners.

[2] The late Mr. J. F. Kershaw, a respected and popular member of the court of appeal. Mr. Kershaw set conscience before self-interest, and honour before place. Resignation cost him a heavy sacrifice, since by it he lost all pension rights.

he believed was a miscarriage of justice, resigned his seat on the bench.

Then Egypt desiring at all costs to return to parliamentary government, threw over Zaghlul. It was an unexpected yet inevitable sacrifice of the man, who had brought about the institution of parliament. But there was no middle course between it and continuance of rule by ministers. Three days later Adli became prime minister.[1] He was never very comfortable in parliament. Zaghlul's prestige was not diminished, and his election to the presidency of the chamber of deputies left him the most formidable figure in politics. To his credit, let it be said that he loyally supported the new ministry, and in return the latter obediently sought his advice. He was less judicious in other matters. His welcome of Maher Pasha and Nokrashi Bey, two of the Egyptians acquitted in the recent trial, was an error of tactics, his approval of their election to important parliamentary commissions no less so. Legally they were both innocent men : but the stigma of a charge of conspiracy clings long about the person of its victim. Apart from this, Zaghlul made an admirable chairman of the chamber, rebuking deputies who spoke irrelevantly, and inspiring debate with good humour. If the restraint and temper of this parliament made an agreeable contrast to that of 1924, the change was due to him alone. He would not permit the Sudan to be mentioned, or the presence of British troops on Egyptian soil to be discussed, and he counselled the chamber to examine the budget with scrupulous care.

Egyptian procedure on the annual estimates differs from the British. The government present the budget as a whole, and parliament appoints commissions to report upon it. There was certainly room for economy in the civil service. Its cost was rising every year and had now reached an alarming total.[2] Palace expenditure also came in for comment. No doubt the maintenance of a sovereign with suitable dignity must always be costly : but the parliament of Egypt

[1] 7th June, 1926.

[2] In 1914, personnel cost £E.5,900,000, in 1924, £E.12,600,000. Permanent officials had risen in number from 16,600 to 32,800, provisional officials from 2,500 to 11,300, and daily paid employees from 38,000 to 102,000 during the same period.

thought a vote of £E.860,000 out of a budget of less than £E.40,000,000 too high a price to pay. The comment was significant of the altered attitude of the people of Egypt towards the throne. No one of her inhabitants had ventured upon it before : and in the dark days, when the State nearly drifted into insolvency through the Khedive's extravagance, the duty of requiring Ismail to distinguish between private and public revenue was left to Evelyn Baring and de Blignières, the British and French controllers of finance. Fifty years later a parliament wholly Egyptian was begging the sovereign to set an example of thrift to his subjects. It was a remarkable development.

But throughout the debate on the budget, Adli was never wholly at his ease. He did not countenance these indirect attacks upon the person of the King, nor did he approve of those upon the cost of representation abroad : [1] he was better acquainted than his fellow deputies with the obligations that sovereignty incurs. Through the chamber of deputies there ran a strong undercurrent of hostility to the cabinet. The left wing of the Wafd neglected no opportunity to embarrass the prime minister, and he and his colleagues were further worried by the knowledge that parliament disapproved of the retention in the civil service of so many foreign officials. In theory all should have gone on the 1st April, 1927 : in practice it was less easy to replace them with Egyptians. Further, under the reservations of the declaration of independence the British government could reasonably demand a sprinkling of Englishmen in the army, railways and the police, since the first service came within the maintenance of imperial communications, and the second within protection of the foreign community. Thus a dual problem confronted Adli. He had to maintain efficient standards of administration, and simultaneously reconcile Egyptian aspirations with the employment of Englishmen. The task was further complicated by the fact that a number of officials after

[1] The cost of the new diplomatic and consular services was severely criticized. Government was accused of creating too many legations and overpaying their staff. Expenditure was certainly heavy. Figures supplied by the parliamentary commission, showed that the cost of representation abroad had risen from £E.20,000 in 1922 to £E.280,000 in 1926.

accepting compensation,[1] had been offered, and had entered into fresh contracts. Parliament was highly indignant on learning the facts, and deputies did not trouble to conceal their feelings. They heckled ministers and under-secretaries, until Adli, tiring of the strain, resigned.

Sarwat was his successor, and parliament grew increasingly active. Extinction of the capitulations was its next objective, undertaken in the hope of tapping fresh sources of revenue. Commerce and business appeared profitable fields to exploit, and deputies pressed that belief upon the government. They complained that the foreigner contributed nothing to receipts from direct taxation: but the latter was free to retort that he paid more than his share of indirect. And there was this further to be said about the land tax, the main source of direct revenue. The cultivator who paid it, received in return water stored in reservoirs and carried to his fields by canals, constructed and maintained at the cost of the State. The land tax in a sense may therefore be regarded more rightly as a return upon capital spent on the betterment of agriculture, than as a contribution to the national revenue. No water, no tax has been the immemorial practice of Egypt. Yet parliament was justified in lamenting the inequality between the Egyptian and the foreigner. It is perhaps more apparent than real, but none the less, the foreigner in law enjoys immunity from taxation, until the Powers approve of its application. There is no reason in the altered circumstances of Egypt to suppose that Europe would withhold her consent to fresh taxation provided that the Egyptian will bear a fair share of the new burden. But nothing was said in the chamber that indicated promise of the last. It is an unfortunate situation. Egypt, if she is to continue to prosper, must increase her available sources of revenue, and death duties and income tax imposed upon all inhabitants irrespective of nationality seem the most obvious, perhaps the only means. All modern governments have been driven to adopt both, and Egypt cannot hope for ever to escape the common penalty.

[1] It must be said that Egypt had treated the dispossessed officials very handsomely. To buy up their vested rights cost the treasury nearly £E.6,500,000.

Throughout this and the succeeding session, parliament studied social reform, passing in turn under review the deficiencies of education, public health, and other branches of the public service. Hitherto government had confined their programme of education to the upper and middle classes,[1] and left the fellah to his own devices. There were excuses for that neglect. A straitened budget was one : an honest uncertainty whether rural Egypt would profit from instruction, a second. Parliament had no misgivings on either point. In its judgment the country was rich enough to afford the luxury of educating both the well-to-do and the poor in light of the fact that the reserve fund stood now at the satisfactory figure of £E.35,000,000, or more than a third of the public debt. Nor were deputies inclined to attach more weight to the second objection, and under their pressure the government introduced an extensive programme of compulsory instruction for all children between the ages of seven and thirteen. It was a solid and satisfactory achievement. In public health, also, less had been accomplished than Egypt could have wished. A commission that sat in 1917 under the chairmanship of Doctor Andrew Balfour, had revealed a number of defects, and authority taking the hint, now examined its findings, and formulated a number of costly and extensive schemes. Unhappily irrigation attracted less attention : its problems were perhaps too technical and too intricate to tempt discussion. The ministry of public works had fallen upon evil days. Since 1922, untried men had claimed the right to judge the conceptions and ideas of Garstin, Dupuis and Murdoch Macdonald, water engineers of established reputation, and the opinions of no less practised ministers, Ismail Pasha Sirri and Mohammed Pasha Shafik. These advisers were now gone, and less competent Egyptians filled the places of Sirri and Shafik. The new-comers usually had little but their political opinions

[1] Lord Cromer once caustically remarked to the writer : " There is only one question in education for most Egyptians who speak to me about it, and that is, how they are to get their children educated at the cost of the State." It was a hasty generalization. The problem to-day is not to find pupils, but to provide instruction and accommodation for the numbers who are willing to pay for both.

to entitle them to office, and ignorant and timid they dared not venture to commit their country to decision. It is a signal misfortune that the conduct of irrigation rested during these years in irresolute hands. Nothing indeed is clearer than this : the Egyptian cultivator must have more water and more adequate means of distributing it, or agriculture will not keep pace with increase in population.[1] Yet no minister of public works has been able to decide between the rival merits of a dam across the White Nile at Gebel Awlia forty miles south of Khartoum, and the raising of the Aswan barrage, or has yet succeeded in reaching an understanding with the Sudan over the waters of the White and Blue Niles.[2] The Gebel Awlia dam has been unlucky. A beginning was made during the war, and a million or so expended upon preliminary work. Then progress came to an abrupt end. A mistaken calculation of cost frightened the Egyptian government, and the project was abandoned.

Many harsh things have been said upon Egypt's experiment with democratic government : but broadly speaking it may be said that parliament has been inspired with honest, if sometimes mistaken, ideals of public duty. Ministers and deputies, no doubt, have still much to learn. The first are afraid to act, lest parliament holds them to account for mistakes of judgment, and the second too frequently trespass upon the province of the executive Yet some of the prophecies made in 1922 have not come to pass. There is little sign of the administrative chaos so confidently predicted, nor has the machinery of government, though it creaks and groans more uneasily than in the past, ceased to revolve.

[1] Egypt is blessed, or cursed, with unusual fecundity. In 1897 the population numbered 9,700,000 souls : twenty years later it had risen by 33 per cent., and in 1957 the total may well approach 18,000,000. Unhappily the area of cultivated land had not kept pace with the increase, and no administrator since the day of Kitchener has faced that serious issue. There are still 1,200,000 acres that await perennial irrigation, and a further 1,800,000 acres which a larger supply of water could make cultivable.

[2] The needs of Egypt and the Sudan are exhaustively reviewed in *Nile Control* (Government Press, Cairo, 1920), by Sir Murdoch Macdonald, adviser to the ministry of public works. Shafik Pasha, then minister, approved of the publication.

Finance at least has survived the ordeal : [1] a welcome indication that all British ideals have not perished under the strain. The administration has behaved also impartially in disputes between sections and classes of society. It has not discriminated between foreigners and Egyptians, nor between the followers of Christ and Mohammed. Moslem society may still speak of the Copts as " our new brothers," but the fact that the cabinet includes two Copts, and that the chamber of deputies recently elected a third as the president is a sufficient answer to the irony.

A more formidable embarrassment arose in the summer of 1927 out of the proposals of the parliamentary commission inquiring into the army estimates. Its report recommended a re-distribution of duties hitherto performed by the sirdar, an increase in regimental establishments, a reduction in the period of military service, and the provision of machine-gun companies to infantry units. They were matters upon which the High Commissioner could reasonably expect to be consulted, since Great Britain having undertaken the defence of Egypt and the protection of foreigners, was clearly interested in the organization of the army. There was little to find fault with in the addition of a thousand rifles to the strength of the army, or in a reduction in the heavy burden of conscription. And if there was now no sirdar, His Majesty's government had themselves to blame for the fact. It was an omission contrary to the spirit and tradition of the British army. Stack had been murdered in the execution of his duty, and a successor should have been appointed within an hour of the funeral. Instead, the post of inspector-general was created, and its occupant was expected to exercise the influence of a commander-in-chief. He was little likely to do so. His rank was lower, his prerogatives were fewer : his business was to report, not to rebuke. He was denied access to the King, the titular head of the army : he had no power to veto the promotion of inefficient officers. The result might have been foreseen. His recommendations were consistently ignored, and the discipline of the army

[1] The handsome surpluses disclosed in each financial year are encouraging signs of Egyptian finance. There was a saving of £E.7,000,000 in the budgeted expenditure of the year 1924–25, £E.3,000,000 in that of 1926–27, and another £E.3,000,000 in 1927–28.

deteriorated. Political opinions ruled advancement in the instance of officers, as they did in that of officials of the civil service. Yet there was no reason to suppose that these military proposals concealed any improper design, much less that they were intended to threaten England : a more artless reasoning inspired their origin. A genuine belief existed in Parliament, that a larger and more efficient army would add to the national dignity. But the British government took a serious view of the matter, and being advised that disorder might occur, ordered warships to Alexandria and Port Said. The measure was as unnecessary as the anxiety was premature. Egyptian society had never professed interest in the army, and it did not do so on this occasion. Outside the walls of the chamber of deputies, there was no talk of the dispute, and sober-minded men did not concern themselves with the controversy.

The King of Egypt had been impatiently awaiting its end to pay his promised visit to England. He was there in the first days of July, and Sarwat Pasha in attendance upon his sovereign, seized the occasion to pay an official visit on the Foreign office. Sir Austen Chamberlain was very glad to see him. These incessant disputes with a people for whom His Majesty's government entertained a friendly regard, disturbed his mind, and he desired nothing better than to remove by treaty all causes of misunderstanding. Compared with the difficulties of Locarno, the negotiation of an alliance with Egypt seemed á simple matter. He was mistaken on that point. Egypt has been a victim in the past of too many conventions and agreements to look with enthusiasm upon addition to their number, or to credit her representatives with the strength and ability to snatch the advantage. Zaghlul by common consent was excepted from the indictment. This remarkable Egyptian, despite the handicap of age and ill-health, might have persuaded his fellow-countrymen to honour proposals to which he had set his name : but Sarwat could never do so. He enjoyed few of Zaghlul's advantages. His personality was less imposing, and his following insignificant in parliament was negligible outside. The electorate had not empowered him to negotiate, nor had any political group desired him to prepare the way for it. These were grave deficiencies : yet negotiation

might have run its course more successfully, if Sir Austen Chamberlain had recognized their full implication. He was misled perhaps by the fact that his visitor came as a prime minister. Elsewhere in the world a negotiator could have furnished no better credentials than to be the head of a government, but Egypt is not as other countries. There, the prime minister is little more than *primus inter pares*, and parliament looks upon him less as the inspiration of government than as an instrument of administration. None the less, Sir Austen began well by insisting upon first knowing the Egyptian view of a satisfactory settlement. It was a request little to the taste of Sarwat, who had expected nothing more than an exchange of amiable sentiments, or at the worst an invitation to listen to the familiar tale of British interests in Egypt ; to be called upon to initiate negotiation was another matter. He was indeed, apart from other disabilities, in no position to do so : he had neither advisers with him nor documents to consult. But these objections did not alter Chamberlain's decision, and Sarwat reluctantly submitted his terms. The Foreign secretary read them, found them unsatisfactory and produced a counterdraft.

It was a false move. The experiment had been tried and failed, and settlement was no more likely in 1927 to come from Great Britain proposing terms, than six years earlier. Sarwat should have been required to amend his terms, or informed of the uselessness of continuing conversation. Great Britain was in a position to wait. In possession of the Sudan, she controlled the future water supply of Egypt : in military occupation of the capital, she could best defend the Suez Canal. Egypt was less happily placed. She had never known where British claims and obligations began or ended ; she had discovered that her sovereignty was restricted by the reservations, and her development retarded by the presence of the capitulations. Providence, the Foreign secretary remarked, had decreed a marriage between the two countries : he might with equal truth have added that no tribunal but His Majesty's government was competent to pronounce a divorce.

Yet it seemed as if the procedure was justified when he submitted to his cabinet in November an agreed draft treaty. He was not without misgivings of its reception : there were

concessions in it which went far beyond their instructions to him. But the cabinet were no more disposed than he to stand on ceremony, and readily accepted a limitation of Great Britain's military freedom in Egypt to a period of ten years, and submission at the end of that term of the problem of the locality of the garrison to the decision of the League of Nations. It was a handsome surrender of principle: but His Majesty's government were moved to make it by Sarwat's equally liberal promises. Egypt bound herself to give preference to British subjects when engaging foreigners, to maintain existing British personnel in her army, the financial and judicial advisers, and until the reform of the capitulations was accomplished, the British officials still serving in the public security department and in the police. In return Great Britain guaranteed the defence of Egypt, undertook to abstain from interference in her government, and promised support in the matter of reform of the capitulations. They were substantial gifts, and Sarwat spoke hopefully of the ratification of the treaty. His optimism lasted only so long as he was in England: then the doubts and misgivings familiar to every Egyptian assailed him. An agreement which seemed satisfactory enough in London, was less so in Cairo. Straightway he repented of his earlier assurances, and sought refuge in excuses. He began by expressing surprise at the impatience of the Foreign secretary: he went on to discover ambiguities in the text of the document.

He had expected guidance from Zaghlul: but that counsellor stricken in years had slipped out of life a month or two before, and Egypt was mourning the loss. Her grief was deep and genuine: no Egyptian had personified the national spirit so ideally, or interpreted the national will so faithfully. He was a man of great courage and tenacity. He had bearded the Khedive, defied Allenby, united Moslem and Copt, and dominated a fickle and impulsive electorate. They were signal achievements. His death threw the Wafd into confusion: though more than one candidate was in the field, there was no obvious wearer of the dropped mantle. The party had grown poor in potential leaders,[1] and

[1] Ali Pasha Shamsi, an excellent administrator, William Makram Ebeid Effendi, a well read man, and Wassif Pasha Ghali, an intellectual and delightful writer, were the more notable exceptions.

Mustapha Pasha Nahas, upon whom the choice fell finally, at the best was an uninspiring personality. It was ill luck for Sarwat. From Nahas, openly opposed to any form of treaty or alliance which acknowledged Great Britain's vested rights in Egypt, he could expect neither sympathy nor assistance.

To Sir Austen Chamberlain, Sarwat's attitude must have been very puzzling. The issues on which the other asked for explanation, had been discussed and settled in London, and he did not understand why the Egyptian's memory required such constant refreshment. The High Commissioner hinted at difficulties and pleaded for patience : but the Foreign secretary had his perplexities too. He could not wait for ever on Sarwat, or delay much longer his promised statement to the House of Commons upon the progress of negotiations. None the less, he did his best to compose the prime minister's anxieties. His Majesty's government did not question Egypt's right to enter into commercial conventions, to intervene on behalf of foreign interests on unimportant issues, and to engage foreign experts when no British-born candidates were available. All this Chamberlain had said before, and he repeated the engagement afresh. Only at Sarwat's new interpretation of one point did he jib. The undertaking to maintain in the Egyptian army " British personnel on the existing scale " could bear only one meaning, and the prime minister's contention that the expression covered the inspector-general and his deputy alone, was altogether preposterous. But so anxious was Chamberlain to satisfy the other's scruples, that he was ready to substitute for officers holding executive commands a military mission. The concession brought ratification no nearer. Sarwat shifted his helm, and set off on a new tack. He complained of the obligation laid upon Egypt in the matter of European police officers and of the financial and judicial advisers. In vain Chamberlain urged that the Powers would require the presence of the first in Egypt before consenting to surrender capitulary rights, and that Egypt might safely leave the second to the judgment of the League of Nations. His words were wasted. Sarwat fell back upon the rash belief that Egypt did not require the assistance of a third party to settle with Europe. " The League meant nothing to him

or to Egypt " he took occasion to add.[1] That unexpected confession pointed to the breakdown of negotiation.

But Chamberlain continued to persevere. He refused no explanation : he left nothing undone to assure Egypt that Great Britain did not desire to re-impose her old administrative ascendency. Particularly did he endeavour to set Sarwat's mind at rest over the purport of Article 8 [2] of the treaty. That article invited Egypt to look to Great Britain in obtaining the services of foreign officials. It was a reasonable suggestion, framed as much in the interest of the first as of the second.[3] The sagacious Curzon had foreseen the inconveniences of an internationalized administration, and his draft of 1921 provided against it : Allenby, sponsor of the declaration of independence, had less intuition. It was a serious omission : for it permitted the re-introduction of a system which Lord Dufferin in 1883 had condemned as costly and unprofitable. An internationalized civil service was responsible for part of the confusion that marked the last years of Ismail's reign. There was then no discipline in the administration. Every foreign official disappointed of pay or promotion, sought redress through the medium of his diplomatic representative, and the machinery of government came to a standstill, until the council of ministers had appeased the angry chancellery. Dufferin checked the evil, and out of its elimination was born an Anglo-Egyptian civil service. It was a makeshift administration at first, looked upon by men of the type of Vincent and Milner as a stepping-stone to employment elsewhere in the empire, but successful enough in the first years of the occupation. Then as the business of reconstruction grew greater, Englishmen of

[1] Despatch No. 8, *Egypt No. 1, 1928.*

[2] Page vi, *Royaume d'Egypte No. 1, 1928*, and page 5, *Egypt No. 1, 1928.*

[3] There had been instances in recent years when the Egyptian government appeared to disregard the national interests. The staff of the new university was one. Nine-tenths of the students knew only English : yet in the appointment of professors in the faculty of arts, authority took little notice of that fact. Out of twenty-four professors, only two were British-born : the others found difficulty in communicating with the students. It was surprising that His Majesty's government permitted the slight to pass without protest or comment. British prestige in education has not recovered from the blow.

lesser calibre crowded into the administration, until Lord Cromer was forced to recruit his subordinates directly from the universities. War put a stop to his experiment, and the declaration of independence administered its death-blow. Yet it must be said that Egypt throughout the occupation was always able to reckon upon the British official's sense of rectitude and duty. These homely virtues have been copied by the pupils, so that though the Englishmen are gone, their ideals remain. That knowledge is surely sufficient reward for the labours of the last.

With Sarwat keeping his own counsel, gossip grew busy over the terms of the treaty negotiated in London. Conjecture filled the air, until the Wafd press loudly called for their publication. The students took up the cry. Some invaded the headquarters of the party : others paraded the streets, demanding rejection of the treaty. In Cairo, Nahas Pasha advised the youthful demonstrators to return to their classrooms, and a resolute commandant of police shepherded the processions into unfrequented streets : but elsewhere in Egypt, notably in Tanta and in Assiut,[1] authority was less firm, and many heads were broken, before order was restored. Men outside political circles looked coldly upon these escapades, and the country might have been saved their spectacle, had the prime minister taken his colleagues into his confidence. Egypt, as the Foreign secretary had said, was free to accept or reject the treaty, and the council of ministers could have exercised that option at once. But Sarwat would confide in no one, and experienced Englishmen understood the significance of his silence.

Their intuition was not at fault. Early in February, it was clear that the Egyptian prime minister was more intent upon extricating himself from an embarrassing position, than upon fulfilling his promise to support the treaty. He continued to say one thing and to do another. He announced his intention to invite the opinion of his colleagues and the leader of the Wafd upon the treaty : but the words were scarcely spoken before he changed his mind. He communicated the text to the second : he withheld it from the

[1] There the demonstrators assaulted the staff of an American school, and the United States legation was moved to make a formal protest to the Egyptian government.

first. It became necessary then to speak plainly: for Nahas Pasha succeeding Sarwat as prime minister, categorically refused any form of settlement that admitted Great Britain's right to maintain a garrison on Egyptian territory, and the Wafd unanimously supported its leader. Hitherto His Majesty's government had refrained from comment upon recent legislation, which in their judgment conflicted with the spirit of the reservations qualifying Egyptian independence. That forbearance could not be extended indefinitely, and since Egypt declined a treaty of alliance, the Foreign secretary gave notice that his government thenceforth would stand strictly upon their rights. He was referring in particular to the amendment of existing laws relating to public meetings, the possession of arms, and the election of village authority. The proposals had not gone yet beyond debate, and His Majesty's government were determined that they should not pass that stage. So long in short as Great Britain was responsible for the safety of foreigners, so long must she exercise supervision over legislation which seemed to threaten that interest. It was with the intention of reminding Egypt again of this fact, that Chamberlain wrote his despatch on the 1st March. The communication startled deputies: they had not expected a reply so swift and uncompromising.

It is proper to say that public security officials, Egyptian no less than British, loudly protested against relaxation of the three laws. The people were still fresh to democracy, and the police thought any curtailment of their power to forbid meetings and disperse processions, to be premature and dangerous. It was an impressive argument, but not altogether convincing to the lay mind. The Egyptian government could hardly assert that the arms act of 1917 had diminished crime,[1] or that the original law of assemblies of 1914 and its successor of 1923 had stopped public meetings: [2]

[1] The figures are unpleasant reading. In 1908, 3,655 felonies, or crimes, were reported; in 1918, 4,494. The incidence then jumped up at an alarming rate. In 1921, the police registered the commission of 8,681 crimes, and in 1927, 7,950 (see 1927 report by El Kessi Pasha, director-general of public security).

[2] During Lord Allenby's term of office, members of the legislative assembly constantly met in secret: notably in the winter of 1919-20, during Lord Milner's visit to Cairo.

still less did it seem reasonable to claim that changes in the election procedure of village authority menaced the safety of the foreign community. But these and other uncertainties were beside the point. The declaration of independence had left to His Majesty's government alone the right of determining whether amendment of existing legislation conflicted or not with British rights and obligations,[1] and it was not for Egypt the beneficiary of that declaration to dispute the fact. But a vain obstinacy led Nahas Pasha to speak in his reply of the independence of his country as absolute. The challenge was answered by a recapitulation of recent history, and Egypt bidden to remember that her exercise of sovereignty depended upon the observance of the letter and spirit of the reservations. The prime minister had brought upon himself the rebuke.

Other notes passed, until His Majesty's government cut short the deadlock by issuing a final warning to Egypt. It took the form of an ultimatum. The Egyptian prime minister must withdraw unconditionally and at once the new assemblies' law, or Great Britain would consider herself free to take any action she thought suitable. Confusion fell upon parliament, and for some hours the issue hung in the balance. Then prudent counsels prevailed, and Nahas offered to withdraw the offending measure from parliament during the existing session. It was less than the British government had required: but Egypt was sufficiently shaken, and the cabinet did not desire to humiliate her further. So much was clear from their reply delivered two days later. They accepted the olive branch: but once again they declared their determination to permit no modification or disregard of the declaration of the 28th February, 1922.

Satisfied that admonition had accomplished its end, His Majesty's government dropped their demand for written guarantees. It was a wise discretion. No undertaking of that nature would have bound future prime ministers, and

[1] Article 3 of the Declaration of Independence is explicit: "The following matters are absolutely reserved to the discretion of His Majesty's government" (then follow the four reservations), and "pending the conclusion of such agreements the *status quo* in all such matters shall remain intact."

Nahas Pasha himself would have resigned rather than furnish one. With his retirement would have gone the forms of constitutional government. Potential candidates for office would have thought twice before defying an angry and unforgiving Wafd and the King must have dissolved Parliament, and governed Egypt as best he could, through agents of his own choosing. With that contingency His Majesty's government, if they pushed matters to an extremity, would have to reckon. The prospect was not inviting. The King was capable enough to play the part: but Egypt would have accused Great Britain of plotting the downfall of constitutional government. It was a heavy responsibility. It is true that the latter had carried the same formidable burden successfully through the confused years that followed the declaration of independence: but she supported it more easily then than was possible now, when control of Egyptian administration had passed out of her keeping. Happily the need for physical action disappeared. Nahas compromised, uncertain perhaps of the measure of support he would receive outside the walls of parliament. It was unlikely to be considerable. The agricultural classes had been singularly inattentive to the course of the negotiations, and the brave words of Nahas found no echo in their hearts. Their interest in politics was flagging. So much was apparent to close observers. The fellah did not desire perhaps the return of the Englishman to the administration, but his dignity is less easily affronted than that of parliament, and encroachment upon the sovereign rights of his country gives him less concern. Thus he seemed indifferent now whether the British garrison stayed or went, or whether Great Britain admitted the claim of Egypt to dominion over the Sudan. When he thought at all of that province, he did so only in terms of water. It would be a misfortune if Great Britain disturbed these meditations of the Egyptian cultivator or diverted them to the advantage of men who object to any form of compromise upon these matters.

Doctrines and shibboleths of the past stand in the way of agreement, and until the Wafd discards them, or Egypt discovers a leader who will do so, Great Britain must submit to the existing situation with as much patience as she can

command. But if the future is still uncertain, both countries can look back upon their past association with humble satisfaction. Especially may Great Britain, who has substituted in Egypt prosperity for poverty and ordered government for misrule, do so. Her achievement cannot be undone. The superstructure may shake, but the foundations will not move.

APPENDIX I

THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN CONVENTION OF 1899

Agreement between Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Highness the Khedive of Egypt, relative to the future administration of the Sudan.

WHEREAS certain provinces in the Sudan which were in rebellion against the authority of His Highness have now been reconquered by the joint military and financial efforts of Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Highness the Khedive; and WHEREAS it has become necessary to decide upon a system for the administration of and for the making of laws for the said reconquered provinces, under which due allowance may be made for the backward and unsettled condition of large portions thereof, and for the varying requirements of different localities;

and WHEREAS it is desired to give effect to the claims which have accrued to Her Britannic Majesty's Government, by right of conquest, to share in the present settlement and future working and development of the said system of administration and legislation; and WHEREAS it is conceived that for many purposes Wadi Halfa and Suakin may be most effectively administered in conjunction with the reconquered provinces to which they are respectively adjacent;

NOW IT IS HEREBY AGREED AND DECLARED by and between the undersigned, duly authorized for that purpose as follows:

Article I.

The word "Sudan" in this agreement means all the territories south of the 22nd parallel of latitude, which—

1. Have never been evacuated by Egyptian troops since the year 1882; or

2. Which, having before the late rebellion been administered by the Government of His Highness the Khedive, were temporarily lost to Egypt, and have been reconquered by Her Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government, acting in concert; or

3. Which may be hereafter reconquered by the two Governments acting in concert.

ARTICLE II.

The British and Egyptian flags shall be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Sudan, except in the town of Suakin, in which locality the Egyptian flag alone shall be used.

ARTICLE III.

The supreme military and civil command of the Sudan shall be vested in one officer, termed the "Governor-General of the Sudan." He shall be appointed by Khedival Decree on the recommendation of Her Britannic Majesty's Government and shall be removed only by Khedival Decree, with the consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

ARTICLE IV.

Laws, as also orders and regulations with the full force of law, for the good government of the Sudan, and for regulating the holding, disposal, and devolution of property of every kind therein situate, may from time to time be made, altered, or abrogated by Proclamation of the Governor-General. Such laws, orders, and regulations may apply to the whole or any named part of the Sudan, and may, either explicitly or by necessary implication, alter or abrogate any existing law or regulation.

All such Proclamations shall be forthwith notified to Her Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Cairo, and to the President of the Council of Ministers of His Highness the Khedive.

ARTICLE V.

No Egyptian law, decree, ministerial arrêté, or other enactment hereafter to be made or promulgated shall apply to the Sudan or any part thereof, save in so far as the same shall be applied by Proclamation of the Governor-General in manner hereinbefore provided.

ARTICLE VI.

In the definition by Proclamation of the conditions under which Europeans, of whatever nationality, shall be at liberty to trade with or reside in the Sudan, or to hold property within its limits, no special privileges shall be accorded to the subjects of any one or more Power.

ARTICLE VII.

Import duties on entering the Sudan shall not be payable on goods coming from Egyptian territory. Such duties may, however, be levied on goods coming from elsewhere than Egyptian territory, but in the case of goods entering the Sudan at Suakin, or any other port on the Red Sea littoral, they shall not exceed the corresponding duties for the time being leviable on goods entering Egypt from abroad. Duties may be levied on goods leaving the Sudan at such rates as may from time to time be prescribed by Proclamation.

ARTICLE VIII.

The jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals shall not extend, nor be recognized for any purpose whatsoever, in any part of the Sudan, except in the town of Suakin.

ARTICLE IX.

Until and save so far as it shall be otherwise determined by Proclamation, the Sudan with the exception of Suakin shall be and remain under martial law.

ARTICLE X.

No Consuls, Vice-Consuls, or Consular Agents, shall be accredited in respect of nor allowed to reside in the Sudan, without the previous consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

ARTICLE XI.

The importation of slaves into the Sudan, as also their exportation, is absolutely prohibited. Provision shall be made by Proclamation for the enforcement of this regulation.

ARTICLE XII.

It is agreed between the two Governments that special attention shall be paid to the Brussels Act of the 2nd July, 1890, in respect to the import, sale, and manufacture of firearms and their munitions, and distilled, or spirituous liquors.

Done in Cairo, the 19th January, 1899.

(Signed) BOUTROS GHALI.
CROMER.

APPENDIX II

DECLARATION OF THE PROTECTORATE

To His Highness Prince Hussein Kamil Pasha.

Your Highness,—

I am instructed by His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to bring to the notice of Your Highness the circumstances preceding the outbreak of war between His Britannic Majesty and the Sultan of Turkey and the changes which the war entails in the status of Egypt.

In the Ottoman Cabinet there were two parties. On the one side was a moderate party, mindful of the sympathy extended by Great Britain to every effort towards reform in Turkey, who recognized that in the war in which His Majesty was already engaged no Turkish interests were concerned and welcomed the assurance of His Majesty and His Allies that, neither in Egypt nor elsewhere would the war be used as a pretext for any action injurious to Ottoman interests. On the other side a band of unscrupulous military adventurers looked to find in a war of aggression, waged in concert with His Majesty's enemies, the means of retrieving the disasters, military, financial, and economic, into which they had already plunged their country. Hoping to the last that wiser counsels might prevail, His Majesty and His Allies, in spite of repeated violations of their rights, abstained from retaliatory action until compelled thereto by the crossing of the Egyptian frontier by armed bands and by unprovoked attacks on Russian open ports by the Turkish Naval forces under German Officers.

His Majesty's Government are in possession of ample evidence that ever since the outbreak of war with Germany His Highness Abbas Hilmi Pasha, late Khedive of Egypt, has definitely thrown in his lot with His Majesty's enemies.

From the facts above set out, it results that the rights over Egypt, whether of the Sultan, or of the late Khedive, are forfeit to His Majesty.

His Majesty's Government have already, through the General Officer Commanding His Majesty's Forces in Egypt, accepted exclusive responsibility for the defence of Egypt in the present war. It remains to lay down the form of the future Government of the country, freed, as I have stated, from all rights of suzerainty or other rights heretofore claimed by the Ottoman Government.

Of the rights thus accruing to His Majesty, no less than of those exercised in Egypt during the last thirty years of reform, His Majesty's Government regard themselves as trustees for the inhabitants of Egypt. And His Majesty's Government have decided that Great Britain can best fulfil the responsibilities she has incurred toward Egypt by the formal declaration of a British Protectorate, and by the government of the country under such Protectorate by a Prince of the Khedivial Family.

In these circumstances I am instructed by His Majesty's Government to inform Your Highness that, by reason of your age and experience, you have been chosen as the Prince of the Family of Mehemet Aly most worthy to occupy the Khedivial position, with the title and style of Sultan of Egypt ; and, in inviting Your Highness to accept the responsibilities of Your high office, I am to give you the formal assurance that Great Britain accepts the fullest responsibility for the defence of the territories under Your Highness against all aggression whencesoever coming ; and His Majesty's Government authorize me to declare that after the establishment of the British Protectorate now announced all Egyptian subjects wherever they may be will be entitled to receive the protection of His Majesty's Government.

With the Ottoman suzerainty there will disappear the restrictions heretofore placed by the Ottoman firmans upon the numbers and organization of Your Highness's Army and upon the grant by Your Highness of honorific distinctions.

As regards foreign relations, His Majesty's Government deem it most consistent with the new responsibilities assumed by Great Britain that the relations between Your Highness's Government and the Representative of Foreign Powers should henceforth be conducted through His Majesty's representative in Cairo.

His Majesty's Government have repeatedly placed on record that the system of Treaties, known as the Capitulations, by which Your Highness's Government is bound, are no longer in harmony with the development of the country : but, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the revision of those treaties may most conveniently be postponed until the end of the present war.

In the field of internal administration, I am to remind Your Highness that, in consonance with the tradition of British Policy, it has been the aim of His Majesty's Government, while working through and in the closest association with the constituted Egyptian Authorities, to secure individual liberty, to promote the spread of education, to further the development of the natural resources of the country, and, in such measure as the degree of enlightenment of public opinion may permit, to associate the governed in the task of Government. Not only is it the intention of His Majesty's Government to remain faithful to such policy, but they are convinced that the clearer definition of Great Britain's position in the country will accelerate progress towards self-government.

The religious convictions of Egyptian subjects will be scrupulously

respected as are those of His Majesty's own subjects, whatever their creed. Nor need I affirm to Your Highness that, in declaring Egypt free from any duty of obedience to those who have usurped political power at Constantinople, His Majesty's Government are animated by no hostility towards the Khaliphate. The past history of Egypt shows, indeed, that the loyalty of Egyptian Mohammedans towards the Khaliphate is independent of any political bonds between Egypt and Constantinople.

The strengthening and progress of Mohammedan institutions in Egypt is naturally a matter in which His Majesty's Government take a deep interest and with which Your Highness will be specially concerned, and in carrying out such reforms as may be considered necessary, Your Highness may count upon the sympathetic support of His Majesty's Government.

I am to add that His Majesty's Government rely with confidence upon the loyalty, the good sense and self-restraint of Egyptian subjects to facilitate the task of the General Officer Commanding His Majesty's Forces, who is entrusted with the maintenance of internal order, and with the prevention of the rendering of aid to the enemy.

I avail myself of this opportunity to present to Your Highness the assurance of my highest respect.

MILNE CHEETHAM.

CAIRO, 19*th December*, 1914.

APPENDIX III

DECLARATION TO EGYPT

WHEREAS His Majesty's Government, in accordance with their declared intentions, desire forthwith to recognize Egypt as an independent sovereign State, and

WHEREAS the relations between His Majesty's Government and Egypt are of vital interest to the British Empire;

The following principles are hereby declared:—

1. The British Protectorate over Egypt is terminated, and Egypt is declared to be an independent sovereign State.

2. So soon as the Government of His Highness shall pass an Act of Indemnity with application to all inhabitants of Egypt, Martial Law as proclaimed on November 2, 1914, shall be withdrawn.

3. The following matters are absolutely reserved to the discretion of His Majesty's Government until such time as it may be possible by free discussion and friendly accommodation on both sides to conclude agreements in regard thereto between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Egypt.

(*a*) The security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt;
(*b*) The defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect;
(*c*) The protection of foreign interests in Egypt and the protection of minorities;
(*d*) The Sudan.

Pending the conclusion of such agreement the *status quo* in all these matters shall remain intact.

28*th February*, 1922.

APPENDIX IV

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Persian Occupation

B.C. 525 to B.C. 332

Cambyses' conquest	B.C. 525
Decline of Persian ascendency and restoration of native rule	B.C. 404
Re-establishment of Persian power	B.C. 343

Greek Occupation

B.C. 332 to B.C. 30

Alexander the Great in Egypt	B.C. 332
Ptolemy I	B.C. 323
Death of Cleopatra	B.C. 30

Roman and Byzantine Rule

B.C. 30 to A.D. 640

Arab Conquest

Mahommedan period	A.D. 640 to 658
Ummeiyad ,,	658 to 750
Abbasid ,,	750 to 868
Tulunides ,,	868 to 905
Satrapy	905 to 969
Fatimid period	969 to 1171

Ayubite Dynasty

A.D. 1171 to 1250

Mameluke Period

A.D. 1250 to 1517

Turkish Conquest

A.D. 1517 to 1798

French Occupation

A.D. 1798 to 1801

Return of Bonaparte to France	A.D. 1799
Abercromby's expedition	A.D. 1801
Evacuation of France	A.D. 1801

DYNASTY OF MOHAMMED ALI

Mohammed Ali

A.D. 1805 to 1849

Repulse of Fraser's expedition	A.D. 1807
Campaign in Arabia	A.D. 1811 to 1819
Occupation of the Sudan	A.D. 1820
Campaign in the Morea	A.D. 1824 to 1827
Campaign in Syria	A.D. 1832 to 1840
Firman of hereditary sovereignty	A.D. 1841

Abbas I

A.D. 1849 to 1854

Said

A.D. 1854 to 1863

Ismail

A.D. 1863 to 1879

Opening of Suez Canal	A.D. 1869
Creation of commission of public debt	A.D. 1876
Commission of enquiry	A.D. 1878
International ministry and its fall	A.D. 1879
Deposition of Ismail	A.D. 1879

Tewfik

A.D. 1879 to 1892

Defeat of Arabi Pasha at Tel El Kebir and British occupation of Egypt	A.D. 1882
Abolition of the kourbash	A.D. 1883
Appointment of Sir Evelyn Baring as British Agent and Consul-General	A.D. 1883
Fall of Khartoum and abandonment of Sudan	A.D. 1885
Wolff Mission	A.D. 1886
Establishment of financial solvency	A.D. 1889

Abbas II

A.D. 1892 to 1914

Re-occupation of the Sudan	A.D. 1898
Anglo-Egyptian Sudan Convention	A.D. 1899
Anglo-French Convention	A.D. 1904
Resignation of Lord Cromer	A.D. 1907
Death of Sir Eldon Gorst and appointment of Lord Kitchener	A.D. 1911
Declaration of a British protectorate, and deposition of Abbas	A.D. 1914

Hussein Kamil

A.D. 1914 to 1917

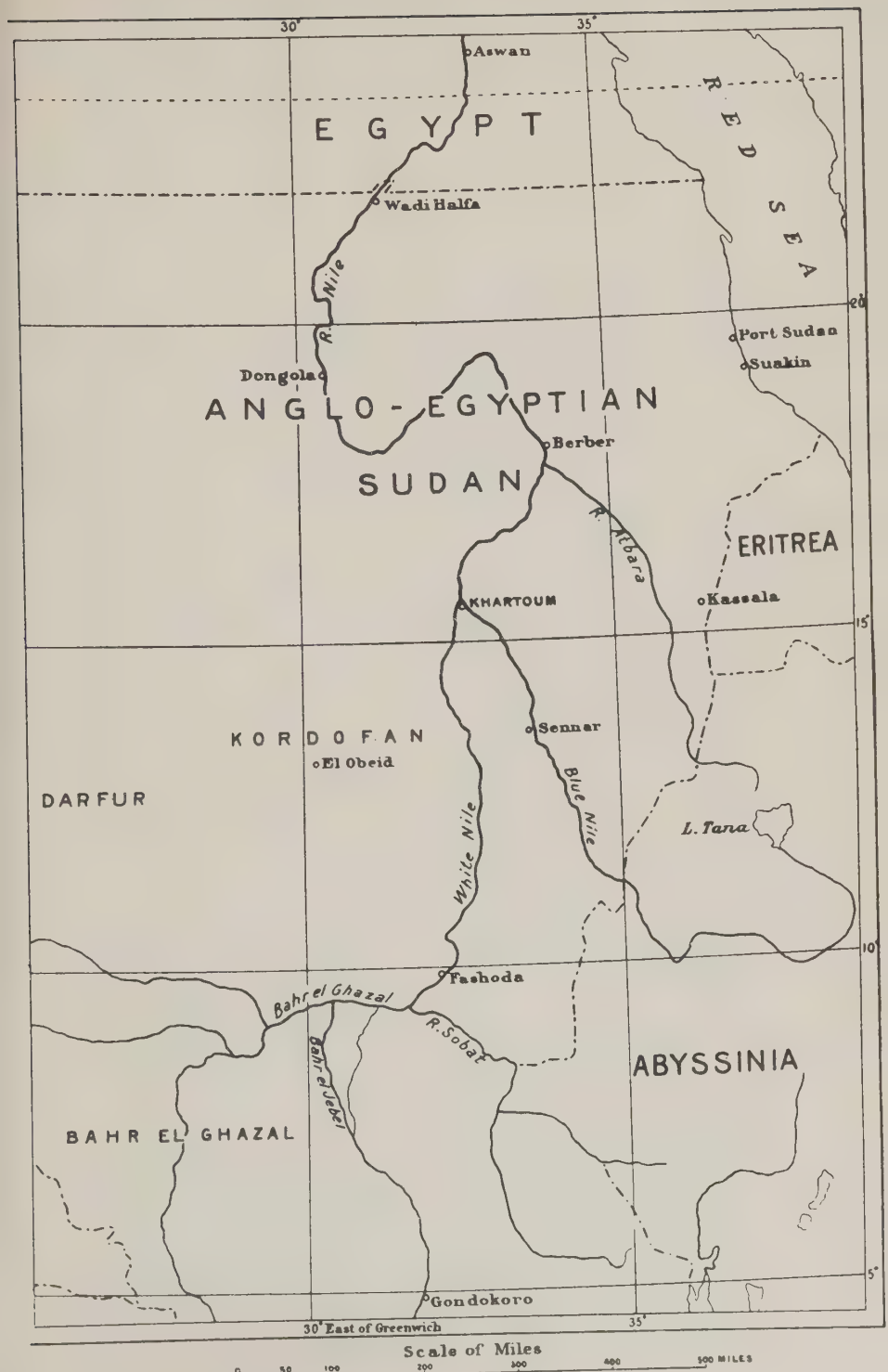
Appointment of Sir H. McMahon as High Commissioner	A.D. 1915
German-Turkish offensive on the Suez Canal	A.D. 1915
Appointment of Sir R. Wingate as High Commissioner	A.D. 1916

Fuad I

A.D. 1917

Deportation of Zaghlul Pasha	A.D. 1919
Appointment of Sir E. Allenby as Special High Commissioner	A.D. 1919
Lord Milner's mission and breakdown of negotiations with Zaghlul Pasha	A.D. 1920
Breakdown of negotiations between Lord Curzon and Adli Pasha	A.D. 1921
Declaration of Independence	A.D. 1922
Breakdown of conversation between Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Zaghlul Pasha	A.D. 1924
Murder of Sir Lee Stack	A.D. 1924
Suspension of parliament	A.D. 1925
Resignation of Lord Allenby and appointment of Lord Lloyd	A.D. 1925
Restoration of parliament	A.D. 1926
Breakdown of negotiations between Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sarwat Pasha	A.D. 1928
Suspension of parliament	A.D. 1928

Drawn by the Survey of Egypt


30°
35°
Aswan
EGYPT
RED SEA
Wadi Halfa
R. Nile
20°
Port Sudan
Suakin
Dongola
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN
SUDAN
Berber
R. Atbara
ERITREA
KHARTOUM
Kassala
15°
KORDOFAN
El Obeid
Sennar
DARFUR
White Nile
Blue Nile
L. Tana
10°
Fashoda
Bahr el Ghazal
R. Sobat
ABYSSINIA
Bahr el Jebel
BAHR EL GHAZAL
Gondokoro
5°
30° East of Greenwich
35°
Scale of Miles
0 50 100 200 300 400 500 MILES

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